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# MODELS OF COMPARATIVE PROSE



# MODELS OF COMPARATIVE PROSE

*Selected and Edited*  
*With Key-Questions, Notes and Assignments*

BY

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OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS  
BOMBAY      CALCUTTA      MADRAS

1934

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Publishers' thanks for permission to include copyright extracts are due to : Mr. John Murray for Sir Francis Younghusband's 'The Mustagh Pass' ; Messrs. J. M. Dent & Sons, Ltd. for W. H. Hudson's 'An Orphaned Black-bird' and A. G. Gardiner's 'The Rule' of the Road' ; Messrs. Macmillan & Co., Ltd. for T. H. Huxley's 'The Method of Science', F. J. Church's 'A Socratic Dialogue' and Sir Rabin-dranath Tagore's 'The Babus of Nayanjore' from 'Hungry Stones and Other Stories' ; Messrs. S. Ganesan for C. F. Andrews' 'An Open-air School' ; Mr. Lloyd Osborne for R. L. Stevenson's 'A Green Caravanserai' ; Messrs. A. & C. Black for C. E. M. Joad's 'What is Civilization?' ; Mr. John Lane for Kenneth Grahame's 'A Whitewashed Uncle' ; Messrs. Constable and Co. for George Gissing's 'My Books' ; Messrs. Cassell & Co. for H. G. Wells' 'A Federal World State' ; Mr. M. K. Gandhi and Messrs. George Allen and Unwin (as publishers of 'Mahatma Gandhi : His Own Story', 'Mahatma Gandhi at Work' and 'Mahatma Gandhi's Ideas') for 'Ahimsa' ; and Messrs. W. Heinemann Ltd. for John Galsworthy's 'Quality'.

## PREFACE FOR TEACHERS

It is almost universally admitted that one of the gravest defects of the present system of education in India is that it does too little to stimulate the desire and the capacity for independent private study and mental self-development so important in the after-school life of students.

In the vast majority of our Secondary schools the students learn to depend entirely upon their teachers and the notes dictated to them, with the result that when such students pass into our Universities they are altogether unfit to enter upon higher studies along the lines of self-reliance appropriate to University work. University teachers are therefore faced with the alternative either of spending much valuable time in trying to accustom their freshmen to new methods, or of following the line of least resistance and dealing with their students as though they were still schoolboys.

The remedy for this state of affairs should obviously, be applied at the point where Secondary education and University education meet, viz. in the High school and Intermediate classes,—at least, pending the time when we shall have succeeded in effecting radical changes along modern lines in the teaching methods of the Secondary schools themselves.

Apart from its evil effect on University teaching, the above-mentioned defect in Secondary teaching produces equally bad if not worse results in the case of students who conclude their formal education at the High school or Intermediate stage. In the case of such students, deprived as they are of higher studies in a University, it is even more important that they should be taught in such a way that they may develop the desire and the capacity to continue their education, either for profit or pleasure, by their own unaided efforts. The educational advancement of a nation may surely be more



accurately judged by the number of such self-dependent students produced, than by the number of degree-holders; for whereas, at any rate in India, the latter in many cases (not being really interested in the subjects of their study) throw away their books the moment they have secured the magic letters after their names, the former, having within them a deeply-rooted desire for knowledge, cannot help but strive to continue their self-education throughout their whole life. And whether such an effort brings them wealth and fame or not, it certainly does more than anything else in the world to raise the general standard of culture, through the influence which such true knowledge-seekers exert upon all those with whom they come in contact.

There can be no change for the better in this matter, we are afraid, unless and until *teachers* realize the need of it. For it lies in their hands, and in theirs alone, to train the coming generations more and more on the lines of self-reliance. Until the teacher makes a break with the evil old system of note-giving and note-cramming, how can the pupil help himself?

We know that when one has oneself been brought up on the old lines, it is no easy matter to set one's face in a new direction even when one is quite convinced of the desirability of doing so. It is too much to expect the whole teaching profession, which consists like other professions of fallible human beings, to make a *volte-face*. Especially in the High school and Intermediate classes, headmasters are likely to be unwilling to allow experiments to be made which might jeopardize the 'percentage of passes' in the public examinations, upon which probably their own reputation and that of their schools to a considerable extent hangs. And this is why, in most High schools and Intermediate colleges, things still jog along in the same old way in the topmost classes, even where new ideas and new methods of teaching are beginning to show faint signs of having penetrated lower down. The gains made in the lower classes, however slight they may be, can never be wholly wasted, no doubt, but it is a pity that their effect should be

even partially undone, when it is so badly needed in our country.

Having ourselves come up against this practical difficulty, in the course of teaching experience both in High schools and colleges in India, we have attempted in this book to provide a means whereby any teacher with the faintest spark of enterprise may begin to insert the thin end of the smallest possible wedge of progress into teaching methods in the critical High school and Intermediate class with perfect safety to the dry and brittle fabric of even the most seasoned of institutions!

It will be seen that some attempt has been made, in the first place, to help the student to feel that the book, even though it may be a prescribed text, has been compiled with some other object than merely that of giving him a task to grind through. A glance at the 'Introduction for Students' will further show that, while there is no idea of trying to make the students dispense with the teacher's help altogether, the aim kept in view is that the student should practise doing for himself such preparatory work as may enable him to get the gist of the passages, the teacher's time being thus saved for expounding the more difficult points and for the essential work of testing and checking the knowledge gained.

It is suggested that the first period of the course might usefully be devoted to the reading of the 'Introduction for Students' and to ensuring that the method of using the book is understood. In this connexion a few words may be added, for the teacher's ear, concerning the plan of the book, and the method suggested. Our aim has been to select certain interesting topics, and to group together some typical passages from famous authors who have dealt with those topics in different ages. In most cases we have chosen passages from one living author, one Victorian, and one of an earlier epoch, hoping by this means to suggest comparisons and contrasts of the styles prevalent in different ages, as well as to draw attention to outstanding idiosyncracies of style of individual authors, without having to resort to

notes on styles which some students might be tempted to try to memorize. Passages from modern authors have been placed first in each group, as they generally present fewer difficulties. The book being intended first of all to assist students in comprehension without assistance from a teacher, we have made the Notes rather full, erring if anything on the side of explaining *more* than is absolutely necessary, and trying also to make them informative in a general way, and not merely periphrastic. This is also the reason why each passage has its own brief 'Introduction' (intended for the student to read, obviously, before he commences to read the piece, with a view to his interest being aroused), and an 'Appreciation' which should be read only after the passage has been understood. Notes on the lives of the authors have been given only in the most summary manner, at the end of each Group.

The very special attention of teachers is drawn to the device of 'Key-Questions' with which each Section opens. If full use is to be made of the book, it should be ensured that the students understand and use this device. Insistence on the recollection of the key-question while the Section is being read will be found (if the editors' experience is paralleled by that of other teachers) to help remarkably towards a quicker and clearer understanding of the central idea of each Section. To this end care has been taken to make each Section contain, generally only one essential point,—and that is embodied in the interrogative form in the key-question of the Section. Thus *ability to answer the key-questions is the acid test of the student's understanding of the Section*. For rapid revision of the subject-matter of the book the key-questions will therefore be found invaluable. The Assignments consist partly of questions that approximate to those likely to be set in examinations, and partly of questions which are a more general test of ability in understanding and expression.

Finally it may be pointed out that, if any teacher is so unenterprising as to be unwilling to try even the very mild experiment suggested above, the book *can* be used

exactly in the manner of an ordinary textbook. But may the authors be permitted to put in a plea to Headmasters and others in authority to the effect that, if they permit the experiment at all, they will try it wholeheartedly and not abandon it over-hastily when the first small obstacle arises either from the side of the students or of the teacher-in-charge? We claim nothing final in regard to the method; objections and difficulties are bound to arise, this and every other device of teaching can only be improved upon by facing the obstacles and objections as they arise, and adapting our devices accordingly. The important thing is to have the *will* to find a better way,—and to make a start on the road to discovery. From that desire has sprung this little book, which is itself only a beginning. If it gives the readers even half the pleasure that the editors experienced in compiling it, then our labour will not have been lost.

GWALIOR

July 1933.

F. G. P.

G. P. A.



# CONTENTS

PREFACE FOR TEACHERS	...	...	v
INTRODUCTION FOR STUDENTS	...	...	xiii
<b>GROUP I—ADVENTURE</b>			
✓ The Mustagh Pass.	Sir Francis Younghusband		1
A Visit to the Pyramids.	Alexander Kinglake	...	8
A Poet's Letter.	Oliver Goldsmith	..	15
<b>GROUP II—SCIENCE</b>			
✓ An Orphaned Blackbird.	✓ W. H. Hudson		26 ✓
* The Method of Science.	✓ T. H. Huxley	...	34
✓ The Effects of Use and Disuse.	Charles Darwin		43
<b>GROUP III—OPEN-AIR LIFE</b>			
✓ An Open-Air School.	C. F. Andrews	.	53
A Green Caravanserai.	R. L. Stevenson	.	61
On Going a Journey.	William Hazlitt	...	72
<b>GROUP IV—CITIZENSHIP</b>			
✓ What is Civilization?	C. E. M. Joad	..	83
The Rule of the Road.	A. G. Gardiner	...	95
The Character of a Gentleman.	Cardinal Newman		107
<b>GROUP V—CHARACTER-STUDIES</b>			
A Whitewashed Uncle.	Kenneth Grahame	...	115
Oliver Goldsmith.	W. M. Thackeray	...	125
Sir Roger and Will Wimble.	Joseph Addison	.	137
<b>GROUP VI—BOOKS</b>			
My Books.	George Gissing	.	147
Kings' Treasuries.	John Ruskin	...	158
Of Studies.	Sir Francis Bacon	.	172
<b>GROUP VII—ARGUMENT</b>			
* A Socratic Dialogue.	F. J. Church	...	180
* A Letter to Lord Chesterfield.	Dr. Samuel Johnson		190
* On the War with America.	The Earl of Chatham		196

## GROUP VIII—HISTORY

A Federal World State. H. G. Wells	207
* The Impeachment of Warren Hastings. Lord Macaulay	.. 218
The Roman Empire. Edward Gibbon	.. 227

## GROUP IX—RELIGION

✓ Ahimsa. Mahatma Gandhi	.. 237
The Creed of a Rationalist Thomas Paine	... 246
Selections from <i>The Bible</i>	.. 251

## GROUP X—FICTION

* The Babus of Nayanjore. Dr. Rabindranath Tagore	258
✓ Quality. John Galsworthy	277
✓ Dotheboys Hall Charles Dickens	292

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

	<i>To face page</i>
THE BASPA VALLEY AT SANGLA	1
THREE PYRAMIDS OF GIZEH, AND THE HUGE BLOCKS OF WHICH THEY ARE BUILT	8
A PINE FOREST	64
WESTMINSTER HALL	219

## INTRODUCTION FOR STUDENTS

This book, if the authors of it are successful in achieving their aim in producing it, should be much more than a mere textbook with notes to help you to pass your examination.

It is intended to help you to learn how to enjoy literature, and how to study. If it succeeds in that, it will go far also in helping you to pass your examination easily, for if you enjoy your work and know how to do it systematically, you will have much less trouble over it.

More, even than this, is included in our aim. If you learn to love reading, and know how to read so as to understand quickly, you will want to keep up your reading after you have left school, and that will help you to become a truly cultured man, which you cannot be, even with half-a-dozen University degrees, unless you keep your love of knowledge keen and your appreciation of beauty bright, throughout your whole life.

Look round upon the older people of your acquaintance, who have been 'educated'. Who are those that are happiest? Are they not the ones who have a keen interest in something or other, and who strive ever to know more about the thing in which they are interested, whatever it may be, business or philosophy, a profession or a hobby, organization or research? Does not the man who is content with things as they are, and, above all,



he who is content with his own mind and abilities, stagnate, and rot? Can any man be really happy in such a condition?

If you want to avoid this stagnation of middle-age, which so many people fall into, you must learn how to use your mind, and to use it to create and not merely to absorb. We do not mean by this that you must necessarily become an inventor, a poet, a writer; inventions and writings are only a few of the creative expressions of the mind. But your mind must be like your body which draws nourishment from the food that you eat. Your body does not merely take in; it assimilates, combines and changes the substances given to it. It turns them into energy, into power of movement, power of reproduction. If you learn to feed the mind thus, you will find that what you read will stimulate your own thoughts—and with such companions, ever at your beck and call, you never need be dull!

You might think that thus to train your mind must be a very difficult task. But it is not. The key to this training is very easy to grasp. It is simply this. Search first for *ideas*, not for the meanings of single words. It is true, of course, as Ruskin says in the passage we have included in this book, that one must 'get into the habit of looking intensely at words', but, for a student, this is the second stage and not the first, and this is where many of our Indian students make their greatest mistake. First, get a general idea of what the author is driving at; then,—if you are reading a book that is really worth 'chewing', (as Bacon calls it in his essay 'Of Studies', quoted in this

book)—check your *general* idea by looking carefully into the *exact* meaning of the words which the author has employed. You will find this way of reading much more interesting than the usual way of looking up 'meanings' first; and, as you increase in skill by practice, you will often find that you need look up only a few words, as the meanings of others will have become clear from their context.

To help you to gain proficiency in this method as quickly as possible, all the passages in this book have been sub-divided into Sections, each Section containing, roughly, only one main idea. For each Section there is a KEY-QUESTION, which is printed at the head of it, and if you can answer the key-question it proves that you have grasped the main idea of the Section. The key-questions, you see, will also be of immense value to you for quick revision, for you can test your understanding of a passage, by seeing whether you can answer the key-question.

The method of study which we advise you to try is as follows :—

1. Read quickly the introduction to the piece you are going to study.
2. Read the title of the first Section.
3. Read the key-question of the Section, *very carefully*. You must try to remember the key-question while you are reading the Section, so be sure of this.
4. Then take a pencil in your hand, and read the Section, *rapidly*. Keep the key-question in mind while you read the Section. If there are

single words or phrases which you don't understand at the first reading, *don't look up the meanings at this stage*, but just *underline* the words, in pencil.

5. When you have read the Section, once, rapidly, see if you can give an answer (in your own mind, not in writing) to the key-question. If you can, that's good. If you cannot, ~~don't~~ be worried. You will soon be able to do it, even at the first attempt, after a little more practice.

6. See if the words and phrases you have underlined are explained in the Notes, under the heading 'Explanations' of that Section. It is almost certain they will be, for we have given very full notes, probably more than you will require, because we want you to use your time in learning to *understand*, not in looking up words in a Dictionary.

If it helps you to write 'meanings' in the margin of your book, you can do so now, in pencil.

7. Now, with the help of the 'meanings', read the passage again, a little more carefully,—and see if you can answer the key-question (which should be still in your mind).

8 Repeat exactly the same process with Section 2, and so on.

When you have finished all the Sections in this way, please read the APPRECIATION, in the Notes, and see if you agree with it. Refer to any points mentioned, and make sure you understand them. This will help you to enjoy and appreciate the style of the author and his workmanship as a writer. You might read the NOTES ON THE

AUTHOR'S LIFE, also, at this point. They are at the end of the Group.

Then try the ASSIGNMENTS. You should do those in writing, and give them to your teacher for correction.

To revise any piece, make sure that you can answer *all* the key-questions and most of the assignments.

As time goes on, you will find that you yourself will be able to frame the key-question of a paragraph; so, here and there in this book, we have left key-questions unframed, for you to practise on. And by the time you have worked through the book, we hope you will not need this intermediary of key-questions at all, but will have got into the habit of *searching for the idea* right away, whenever you read a passage. When you can do that, you will have found the key that opens the gateway that leads to new worlds of pleasure, the world of the Kings' Treasuries of which Ruskin has written, and the world of the treasures of your own creative imagination, which the key of understanding will help you to unlock, to enjoy, and to use aright.



*By kind permission of the Himalayan Club*

# THE BASPA VALLEY AT SANGLA

## GROUP I—ADVENTURE

### THE MUSTAGH PASS

#### § I

[KEY-QUESTION : *What are the special difficulties of travel at these high altitudes?*]

As soon as light began to break we were astir next morning. It was freezing hard. What had been a running stream was frozen solid. A good warm breakfast, with plenty of hot tea, was soon ready for us all. The ponies were fed and loaded up, Shuker Ali shouting cheerily all the time. And then we started off, making straight for the mountain barrier, which was about five miles distant, covered with snow wherever snow could lie, but presenting mostly an appearance of rugged, precipitous cliffs.

I marched eagerly on ahead with Wali, both of us anxious to solve as quickly as possible the problem as to how we could surmount the barrier. Wali said he knew we should have to turn sharply either to the right or to the left, but which it was he could not say for certain. Happily, as we got close under the range all doubt disappeared. A wide valley opened up on the left. Wali recognized it at once, and said that up it we should find the gap we were looking for. I could restrain myself no longer, but pushed on ahead even of Wali. We could not actually see the pass, but

there it undoubtedly would be. And on the other side—what?

The going was perfectly easy. The valley was wide and open. And I walked on as hard as I could. But the pass seemed positively to recede as I advanced. As I topped one rise I would find there were other rises beyond. And, eager as I was, my pace began to slacken just when I was wanting it to increase. For I was at 16,000 feet above sea-level, and at that height you cannot walk at any rapid pace. At last I came to a little lake; beyond it was a rise I was sure must be the pass itself. I worked myself up for a final effort, and literally ran up the rise. And this one really was the top. And beyond? What did I see?

## §2

[KEY-QUESTION: What was the feeling produced in the traveller by this scene?]

Beyond was the fulfilment of every dream I had had three years ago. There, arrayed before me across a valley, was a glistening line of splendid peaks, all radiant in the sunshine, their summits white with purest snow, their flanks stupendous cliffs, and bearing away the rich abundance of their snowy covering were vast glaciers rolling to the valley bottom. I lay down on the ground and gazed and gazed upon the scene, muttering to myself deep thankfulness that to me it had been to see such glory. Here was no disappointment—no trace of disillusionment. What I had so ardently longed to see was now spread out

before me. Where I had reached no white man had ever reached before. And there before me were peaks of 26,000 feet, and in one place 28,000 feet in height, rising above a valley bottom only 12,000 feet above sea-level. For mountain majesty and sheer sublimity that scene is hardly to be excelled. And, <sup>plain, clean</sup> ~~abstere~~ <sup>emphatic</sup> though it was, it did not repel—it just enthralled me. This world was more wonderful far than <sup>any</sup> I had ever known before. And I seemed to grow greater myself from the mere fact of having seen it. Having once seen that, how could I ever be little again? That was the kind of feeling this mighty scene produced.

And then, too, the thought came on me : How strange it is that so few men should ever see this grandeur ! Century after century, for thousands and thousands, perhaps millions of years, those mountains have stood there in all their radiant glory. But how wasted was it, with no human eye to see it ! And perhaps it is because of this that we who have been privileged to see such sights have a peculiar longing in us to be able to communicate to our fellows something of that glory <sup>we</sup> we have known.

\* \* \* \*

### §3

[KEY-QUESTION: Why did he feel thankful for having seen this sight?] <sup>(th. comp. of us)</sup>

It was an hour before the caravan caught me up and then I had to bring myself back from dreams <sub>real life</sub>



and think of what we had to do. The mountains ahead of us were very grand and very magnificent, but the practical point to be considered was how we were to get over them. How that was to be done did not seem particularly clear. But first we had to get down to the valley of the Oprang River which ran at the base of these stupendous mountains and flowed down from some vast glacier we could see in the distance on the left. So we descended from the pass and soon found a good patch of jungle at which to <sup>camp—here</sup> bivouac for the night. And the next day we ascended a tributary of the Oprang—a tributary which ran directly down from the great range—and again we bivouacked in some good jungle, though it proved to be our last comfortable bivouac where we could have plenty of firewood before the tussle with the mountains began in earnest. *in a moment*

But before the struggle actually began I had one of those surprises which make up for every hardship. Ever since I had begun to think about the Himalaya, I had wanted to see at quite close quarters some stupendous snowy peak. Now, all of a sudden, as we rounded a corner, I saw up a side valley on the left a real monarch which <sup>threw</sup> utterly into the shade my uncle's picture of 'A peak in the Kuen-Lun'. It towered thousands of feet above me and quite close by; and it was one of those sights which make you literally gasp as you suddenly see them. My whole being seemed to come to a standstill, and then to go rushing out in a kind of joyous wonder. I kept saying to myself, 'How simply splendid! How

splendid !' <sup>3 p.m. day</sup> There before me was a peak of almost perfect proportion, clothed in a glittering mantle of pure white snow and ice for thousands of feet, and standing up head and shoulders above all the mountains round, though they themselves must have been of the order of 20,000 feet above sea-level. The sight of that tremendous mountain, so massive, so firm and strong, so lofty, and so spotlessly and dazzlingly pure and white, necessarily left an impression which has lasted through life. It could not fail to do that. But it did something more ; it provided a measure and standard in my mind by which I tested things. This has its inconveniences, for when you have in your mind a standard so lofty and so pure, you feel miserable at not being able to come up to it. But anyhow, you have seen what real loftiness and purity is, and are able to appreciate it when you see it. And this is something for which you can never be too thankful.

*Enough*

SIR FRANCIS YOUNGHUSBAND

(From *Wonders of the Himalaya*)

## NOTES

### INTRODUCTION

Have you ever seen the great Himalayan peaks, even from a distance of sixty to a hundred miles, say from Mussoorie or Darjeeling? If you have, then you will understand the feeling of wonder, almost of reverence, with which this now-famous traveller and writer, Sir Francis Younghusband, gazed upon them when he made one of his first trips across them. Still better will you

understand his feeling, if you make a trip to Kashmere, where by going on a pony and on foot right up the valley of the Lidar, past Pahlgam, to Amarnath or Kolahoi, you can cross actual passes (though not quite so high as the Mustagh Pass here described), walk over the surface of glaciers, and reach the slopes of mighty peaks which soar near to the 20,000-foot line. It is an experience that no Indian boy with an adventurous spirit should miss, if he has the chance of it. If you have never seen the Himalayas, and cannot do so in your coming vacation, then the next best thing for you to do is to study closely the picture in this book, as you read this description.

#### A. COMPREHENSION

##### §1. The journey to the Pass

###### KEY-QUESTION

‘What are the special difficulties of travel at these high altitudes? What are the means of transport?’

###### EXPLANATIONS

**at that height you cannot walk at any rapid pace :** this is due not simply to the steepness of the mountains, but because the atmosphere gets rarer the higher you go, the lungs cannot get enough oxygen, so you get out of breath quickly.

##### §2. The view from the Pass

###### KEY-QUESTION

‘What was (a) “the kind of feeling” and (b) the “peculiar longing” which this mighty scene produced in the traveller?’

###### EXPLANATIONS

**every dream I had had three years ago :** in the earlier parts of the book from which this piece is taken, Sir Francis (then Capt. Younghusband)

tells how he had always longed to explore the Great Himalayan Range.

**austere though it was, it did not repel:** there is sometimes a feeling of repulsion at the utter loneliness of a place absolutely without human inhabitants, but he did not feel this here.

### §3. The near view of a great peak

#### • KEY-QUESTION

'Why did he feel thankful at having seen this sight?'

#### EXPLANATIONS

**Bivouac:** (used both as a noun and as a verb) pronounced 'bi-voo-ack' : = to camp without tents, i.e. in the open. **plenty of firewood:** one of the chief difficulties of travelling at such altitudes is that you are above the level at which trees can grow, so you have to carry firewood, for the nights are fearfully cold

**my uncle's picture:** his uncle was also a famous explorer and the sight of a picture of a great Himalayan peak in his uncle's house had helped to make Younghusband keen on following in his uncle's footsteps.

### B. APPRECIATION

The style of this piece is typically modern. Note the short, simple sentences, especially in the portions descriptive of the actual happenings, e.g. in section 1. This gives you the effect of movement, while the longer sentences employed in the parts descriptive of the author's feelings provide a striking contrast and convey the idea of contemplation.

### C. ASSIGNMENTS

1. Make a list of some of the difficulties which a Himalayan explorer has to undergo.
2. Make a list of the various mental impressions and emotions which the author of this piece mentions

as having been produced in him as a result of the sights he saw on this journey.

3. Using the style of this author (see under 'APPRECIATION'), give a brief account of any experience of your own which has made a deep impression on your mind.

## A VISIT TO THE PYRAMIDS

### §1

[KEY-QUESTION: *What horrifying experience of childhood does the author associate with his first impression of the Pyramid?*]

*(rem. by group 1100)*  
I went to see and to explore the Pyramids.

Familiar to one from the days of early childhood are the forms of the Egyptian pyramids, and now, as I approached them from the banks of the Nile, I had no print, no picture before me, and yet the old shapes were there; there was no change: they were just as I had always known them. I straightened myself in my stirrups, and strived to persuade *drive into eager note* my understanding that this was real Egypt, and that those angles which stood up between me and the West were of harder <sup>stone</sup> stuff, and more ancient than the paper pyramids of the green portfolio. Yet it was not till I came to the base of the great pyramid, that reality began to <sup>impress itself</sup> weigh upon my mind. Strange to say, the bigness of the distinct blocks of stones was the first sign by which I attained to feel the immensity of the whole pile. When I came, and trod, and touched with my hands, and climbed, in order that by climbing I might come to the top of one single stone, then



THE HUGE BLOCKS OF WHICH THE PYRAMID IS



THREE PYRAMIDS OF GIZEH

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and almost suddenly, a cold sense and understanding of the Pyramid's enormity came down, over-casting my brain. <sup>perceptible all around it from 9 to 10</sup>

Now try to endure this homely, sick-nursish illustration of the effect produced upon one's mind by the mere vastness of the great Pyramid. When I was very young (between the ages, I believe, of three and five years old) being then of delicate health, I was often in time of night the victim of a strange kind of mental oppression. <sup>from the dark darkness, a sort of vague idea of a</sup> I lay in my bed perfectly conscious and with open eyes, but without power to speak, or to move, and all the while my brain was oppressed to distraction by the presence of a single <sup>vague idea of the unknown - the def-ite</sup> and abstract idea, ~~the~~ the idea of solid Immensity. It seemed to me in my agonies, that the horror of this visitation arose from its coming upon me without form or shape—that the close presence of the direst monster ever bred in Hell would have been a thousand times more tolerable than that simple idea of solid size; my aching mind was fixed and rivetted down upon the mere quality of vastness, vastness, vastness; and was not permitted to invest with it any particular object. <sup>thought like with a vast concept of it.</sup> If I could have done so, torment would have ceased. When at last I was roused from this state of suffering, I could not, of course, in those days, (knowing no verbal metaphysics, and no metaphysics at all except by the dreadful experience of an abstract idea)—I could not, of course, find words to describe the nature of my sensations, and even now I cannot explain why it is that the forced contemplation of a mere quality, distinct from matter, should be so terrible.



Well, now my eyes saw and knew, and my hands and my feet informed my understanding, that there was nothing at all abstract about the great Pyramid—it was a big triangle, sufficiently concrete, easy to see, and rough to the touch ; it could not, of course, affect me with the peculiar sensation I have been talking of, but yet there was something akin to that old nightmare agony in the terrible completeness with which a mere mass of masonry could fill and load my mind.

## §2

[KEY-QUESTION: *What causes the Pyramids to seem to belong to another world ? Why were they built ?*]

And Time, too, the remoteness<sup>ness</sup> of its origin, no less than the enormity of its proportions, screens an Egyptian Pyramid from the easy and familiar contact of our modern minds. At its base the common earth ends, and all above is a world—one not created of God—not seeming to be made by men's hands but rather the sheer giant-work of some old dismal age weighing down this younger planet. *dark, dreary, unending, the pangs of hell*

Fine saying ! But the truth seems to be, after all, that the Pyramids are quite of this world ; that they were piled up into the air for the realization of some kingly *ambition* crotchets about immortality—some priestly longing for burial fees ; and that as for the building—they were built like coral rocks by swarms of insects—by swarms of poor Egyptians, who were not only the abject tools and slaves of

power, but who also ate onions for the reward of their immortal labours! The Pyramids are quite of this world.

## §3

[KEY-QUESTION: *Why was the author glad that he had not made a present to the man who asked for one?*]

I of course ascended to the summit of the great Pyramid and also explored its chambers; but these I need not describe. The first time that I went to the Pyramid of Ghizeh, there were a number of Arabs hanging about in its neighbourhood, and wanting to receive presents on various pretences; their sheikh was with them. There was also present an ill-looking fellow in soldier's uniform. This man on my departure claimed a reward, on the ground that he had maintained order and decorum amongst the Arabs. His claim was not considered valid by my dragoman, and was rejected accordingly. My donkey-boys afterwards said they had overheard this fellow propose to the sheikh to put me to death whilst I was in the interior of the great Pyramid, and to share with him the booty. Fancy a struggle for life in one of those burial chambers, with acres and acres of solid masonry between oneself and the daylight. I felt exceedingly glad that I had not made the rascal a present.

ALEXANDER KINGLAKE  
(From *Eothen*)

## NOTES

## INTRODUCTION

The Pyramids of Egypt are one of the Seven Wonders of the world, because even with all the discoveries of modern science, we find it impossible to build up such gigantic piles of immense blocks of stone. How did they do it in those old days? Those who have only seen pictures of the Pyramids cannot form an idea of their size.

## A. COMPREHENSION

§1. **The enormity of the Pyramids, and how it affects the mind**

## KEY-QUESTION

‘What horrifying experience of the author’s childhood does he associate with his first impression of the Pyramid?’

## EXPLANATIONS

**print:** a printed picture.

**old shapes:** those familiar to him in childhood.

**persuade my understanding:** make myself believe (that I had come to Egypt). (It is difficult to take in an unusual experience all at once.)

**angles:** the triangular sides.

**harder stuff:** stone.

**portfolio:** a folding book made of separate pictures.

**cold sense:** my mind could not form an idea of such vastness.

**sick-nursish illustration:** the illustration helps the reader to understand the writer’s feeling, just as a nurse helps a sick man by attending to even his smallest requirements.

**my brain . . . . . Immensity:** I was almost maddened by the thought of immensity, not as a concrete object (e.g. some large shape), but as a vague idea of vastness in the abstract, without definite form.

**rivettcd**: fastened securely (as one piece of metal is fastened to another by rivets).

**was not permitted to invest . . . object**: I could not connect the idea of vast size with the idea of some particular vast object.

**knowing no verbal metaphysics**: I did not then know anything of the science of metaphysics, the science of the origins of thought and nature, the study of which helps us to understand our sensations and feelings.

## §2. The great antiquity of the Pyramids and how it affects the mind

### KEY-QUESTION

a. 'Why do the Pyramids seem to belong to another world?'

b. 'How and why were they actually built?'

### EXPLANATIONS

**remoteness of its origin**: the Pyramids were built about 5,000 years ago.

**screens . . . . . minds**: prevents our minds from feeling at ease, because the Pyramids belonged to an age quite different from our own.

**not created of God**: not made by God.

**dismal age**: a dark and hardly civilized period of the distant past, when giants are believed to have existed.

**kingly crotchets about immortality**: the kings of Egypt built the Pyramids as tombs in order to preserve their bodies for a future immortal life.

**priestly longing for burial fees**: the priests were very influential in ancient Egypt, and they might have urged the kings to build such tombs in order to extract large sums of money for burying them.

**coral rocks**: rocks built by millions of tiny insects in the sea.

**abject tools**: slavish instruments.

**onions . . . . . labours:** though the Pyramids seem so extraordinary, they were not built by magic or by superhuman beings, but by ordinary men who were fed with only common food.

### §3. A narrow escape—

#### KEY-QUESTION

'Why was the author glad that he had not given a present to the Arab who asked him for one?'

#### EXPLANATIONS

**the great Pyramid:** the Pyramid of Cheops, built in 3700 B.C.

**sheikh:** an Arab leader.

**decorum:** decent behaviour.

**dragoman:** guide.

**fancy a struggle . . . . . daylight:** supposing he had been attacked by the villains while inside the Pyramid, there would have been very little chance of his escaping alive.

## B. APPRECIATION

Note how cleverly Kinglake creates in our minds the idea of the immensity of the Pyramids. The best way of describing an impression is to state how it came to you, and leave the rest to the reader's imagination. Our author does not give too many details (about dimensions, etc.) for they would only tire the readers. Kinglake always endeavours to impress you not only with the things he saw, but also with the thoughts and feelings that he experienced on his travels. This is what makes his descriptions so fascinating. You feel as if you were on familiar terms with him.

## C. ASSIGNMENTS

1. Re-write the last paragraph as it might have been if the attack by the Arabs had really occurred.

2. What are the other six 'wonders of the world'?
3. Write a brief essay on the Pyramids.
4. Describe any 'nightmare' that you have experienced.

## A POET'S LETTER OF ADVENTURE

§1 in School note

[KEY-QUESTION: *What caused Goldsmith to miss his ship and why did he decide to visit his friend on his way home?*]

My dear Mother,

If you will sit down and calmly listen to what I say, you shall be fully resolved in every one of those many questions you have asked me. I went to Cork, and converted my horse, which you prized so much higher than Fiddle-back, into cash, took my passage in a ship bound for America and, at the same time, paid the captain for my freight and all the other expenses of my voyage. But it so happened that the wind did not answer for three weeks, and you know, mother, that I could not command the elements. My misfortune was, that, when the wind served, I happened to be with a party in the country and my friend the captain never enquired after me, but set sail with as much indifference as if I had been on board. The remainder of my time I employed in the city and its environs, viewing everything curious, and you know no one can starve while he has money in his pocket.

Reduced, however, to my last two guineas, I began to think of my dear mother and friends

whom I had left behind me, and so bought that generous beast Fiddle-back and bade adieu to Cork with only five shillings in my pocket. This, to be sure, was but a scanty allowance for man and horse towards a journey of above a hundred miles ; but I did not despair, for I knew I must find friends on the road.

I recollected particularly an old and faithful acquaintance I made at college, who had often and earnestly pressed me to spend a summer with him, and he lived but eight miles from Cork. This circumstance of vicinity he would expatiate on to me with peculiar emphasis. 'We shall,' says he, 'enjoy the delight of both city and country, and you shall command my stable and my purse.'  
*have at disposal* *home*

## §2

[KEY-QUESTION: *How did the treatment which Goldsmith received differ from what he had expected ?*]

However, upon my way, I met a poor woman all in tears who told me her husband had been arrested for a debt he was not able to pay, and that his eight children must now starve, bereaved as they were of his industry, which had been their only support. I thought myself at home, being not far from my good friend's house, and therefore parted with a moiety of all my store ; and pray, mother, ought I not to have given her the other half-crown, for what she got would be of little use to her? However, I soon arrived at the mansion

of my affectionate friend, guarded by the vigilance of a huge mastiff, who flew at me, and would have torn me to pieces but for the assistance of a woman, whose countenance was not less grim than that of the dog; yet she with great humanity relieved me from the jaws of this Cerberus, and was prevailed on to carry up my name to her master.

Without suffering me to wait long, my old friend, who was then recovering from a severe fit of sickness, came down in his nightcap, nightgown, and slippers, and embraced me with the most cordial welcome, showed me in, and, after giving me a history of his indisposition, assured me that he considered himself peculiarly fortunate in having under his roof the man he most loved on earth, and whose stay with him must, above all things, contribute to his perfect recovery. I now repented sorely I had not given the poor woman the other half-crown, as I thought all my bills of humanity would be punctually answered by this worthy man. I revealed to him all my distresses; and freely owned that I had but one half-crown in my pocket; but that now, like a ship after weathering out the storm, I considered myself secure in a safe and hospitable harbour. He made no answer, but walked about the room, rubbing his hands as one in deep study. This I imputed to the sympathetic feelings of a tender heart, which increased my esteem for him, and as that increased, I gave the most favourable interpretation to his silence. I construed it into delicacy of sentiment, as if he dreaded to wound my pride by expressing his



*feelings of pity*  
commiseration in words, leaving his generous conduct to speak for itself.

It now approached six o'clock in the evening ; and as I had eaten no breakfast, and as my spirits were raised, my appetite for dinner grew uncommonly keen. At length the old woman came into the room with two plates, one spoon, and a dirty cloth, which she laid upon the table. This appearance, without increasing my spirits, did not diminish my appetite. My protectress soon returned with a small bowl of sago, a small porringer of sour milk, a loaf of stale brown bread, and a heel of an old cheese all over crawling with mites. My friend apologized that his illness obliged him to live on slops, and that better fare was not in the house ; observing, at the same time, that a milk diet was certainly the most helpful ; and at eight o'clock he again recommended a regular life, declaring that for his part he would lie down with the lamb and rise with the lark. My hunger was at this time so exceedingly sharp that I wished for another slice of the loaf, but was obliged to go to bed without even that refreshment.

This l<sup>l</sup>entlen entertainment I had received made me resolve to depart as soon as possible ; accordingly, next morning, when I spoke of going, he did not oppose my resolution ; he rather commended my design, adding some very sage counsel upon the occasion. 'To be sure,' said he, 'the longer you stay away from your mother the more you will grieve her and your other friends ; and possibly they are already afflicted at hearing of this foolish expedition you have made.' Not-

withstanding all this, and without any hope of softening such a sordid heart, I again renewed the tale of my distress, and asking 'how he thought I could travel above a hundred miles upon one half-crown?' I begged to borrow a single guinea which I assured him should be repaid with thanks. 'And you know, Sir,' said I, 'it is no more than I have done for you.' To which he firmly answered, 'Why, look you, Mr. Goldsmith, that is neither here nor there. I have paid you all you ever lent me, and this sickness of mine has left me bare of cash. But I have bethought myself of a conveyance for you; sell your horse, and I will furnish you a much better one to ride on.' I readily grasped at his proposal, and begged to see the nag; on which he led me to his bedchamber and from under the bed he pulled out a stout oak stick. 'Here he is,' said he; 'take this in your hand, and it will carry you to your mother's with more safety than such a horse as you ride.' I was in doubt, when I got it into my hand, whether I should not, in the first place, apply it to his pate; but a rap at the street door made the wretch fly to it and when I returned to the parlour, he introduced me, as if nothing of the kind had happened, to the gentleman who entered, as Mr. Goldsmith, his most ingenious and worthy friend, of whom he had so often heard him speak with rapture. I could scarcely compose myself; and must have betrayed indignation in my mien to the stranger, who was a counsellor-at-law in the neighbourhood, a man of engaging aspect and polite address.

## §3

[KEY-QUESTION: *In what ways did the treatment Goldsmith receive at the lawyer's house differ from that which he received at the other man's ?*]

After spending an hour he asked my friend and me to dine with him at his house. This I declined at first, as I wished to have no further communication with my hospitable friend ; but at the solicitation of both, I at last consented, determined as I was by two motives : one, that I was prejudiced in favour of the looks and manner of the counsellor ; and the other, that I stood in need of a comfortable dinner. And there, indeed, I found everything that I could wish, abundance without profusion, and elegance without affectation. In the evening, when my old friend, who had eaten very plentifully at his neighbour's table, but talked again of lying down with the lamb, made a motion to me for retiring, our generous host requested I should take a bed with him, upon which I plainly told my old friend that he might go home and take care of the horse he had given me, but that I should never re-enter his doors. He went away with a laugh, leaving me to add this to the other little things the counsellor already knew of his plausible neighbour.

And now, my dear mother, I found sufficient to reconcile me to all my follies ; for here I spent three whole days. The counsellor had two sweet girls to his daughters, who played enchantingly on the harpsichord ; and yet it was but a melancholy pleasure I felt the first time I heard them : for that being the first time also that either of

them had touched the instrument since their mother's death, I saw the tears in silence trickle down their father's cheeks. I every day endeavoured to go away, but every day was pressed and obliged to stay. On my going, the counsellor offered me his purse, with a horse and servant to convey me home; but the latter I declined, and only took a guinea\*to bear my necessary expenses on the road.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH  
(*Letter to his Mother*)

## NOTES

In this letter Goldsmith tells his mother how he tried to go to America, but missed the ship on which he had booked his passage. It is just like Goldsmith to have been enjoying himself with a party of friends in the country, when the ship set sail. Then he goes on to describe his visit to a supposed friend, and the contrast between the treatment he received there and that which he received from a complete stranger. From this letter you will see Goldsmith's love of wandering, his generosity, his carelessness, his love for his home, and that delightful humour which has made him so popular with the English-reading world.

### A. COMPREHENSION

§1. **Goldsmith misses his ship, and plans to return home again**

#### KEY-QUESTION

'What caused Goldsmith to miss his ship, and why did he decide to visit his friend on the way home?'

#### EXPLANATIONS

**those many questions:** (his mother had asked him to tell her all about himself, in a previous letter of hers to which this is the answer.)

**Cork:** the seaport of Southern Ireland, from which ships sailed to America.

**converted my horse . . . into cash:** sold my horse.

**Fiddle-back:** the name of the inferior horse which he bought after he had missed the ship. The name shows what sort of a horse it was (with a back shaped like a fiddle), and why his mother did not like it as much as the one he had brought from home.

**I could not command the elements:** I could not control the wind.

**My misfortune was . . . on board:** (note the quaint humour; he blames the captain for not sending for him. It is like blaming the guard of the train for not stopping the train for a late passenger!)

**I began to think . . . :** (apparently he did not think of his mother and friends until he began to feel short of money. Goldsmith was extremely improvident and careless about money. He took it for granted that friends would supply him.)

**vicinity:** nearness.

**expatiate on:** speak at length upon

**you shall command my stable and my purse:**  
I will place my horses and my money at your disposal.

## §2. Goldsmith visits his friend

### KEY-QUESTION

'How did the treatment that Goldsmith received differ from what he had expected?'

### EXPLANATIONS

**arrested for a debt:** in those days debtors were imprisoned until they could pay; this often meant that they were imprisoned for life, for they were unable to earn any money while in prison. This cruel law has now been changed.

**I thought myself at home** : I felt sure of being welcomed at my friend's house, so I thought it would not be necessary to keep any money.

**a moiety** : half. (Observe the generosity of Goldsmith, which Thackeray speaks of in the passage quoted in Group V.)

**mastiff** : a dog of large and powerful breed.

**Cerberus** : the three-headed dog which, according to the Greek myths, guards the entrance to Hades, the world of the Dead.

**nightcap, nightgown** : sleeping costume.

**he considered himself . . . recovery** : observe the exaggerated sentiment, and contrast it with the treatment Goldsmith actually received.

**freely owned** : frankly admitted.

**I construed . . . itself** : when his friend remained silent, Goldsmith thought that it was due to his deep feeling and his reluctance to express pity lest he might wound Goldsmith's pride, but that he would act generously.

**porringer** : small basin.

**heel . . . mites** : the last portion of a cheese full of worms (as it had gone rotten).

**slops** : liquid diet.

**lie down . . . the lark** : go to bed early and rise early.

**lenten** : lent is the season when devout Christians observe a fast.

**this foolish expedition** : the attempt to go to America

**sordid** : selfish, mean.

**neither here nor there** : not relevant, beside the point, not concerning the matter under discussion.

**bethought myself of** : considered, planned.

**nag** : horse.

**pate** : head.

**fly to it** : run quickly to it.

**parlour** : the room where visitors are received.

**indignation in my mien** : anger on my face.

**counsellor-at-law** : lawyer.  
**engaging aspect and polite address** : charming appearance and good manners.

### §3. Goldsmith stays with the lawyer

#### KEY-QUESTION

'In what ways did the treatment Goldsmith received at the lawyer's house differ from that which he received at the other man's?'

#### EXPLANATIONS

**my hospitable friend** : (irony). W

**solicitation** : request.

**abundance without profusion, and elegance without affectation** : plenty without excess or wastage, and good appearance without the intention of merely making a show.

**take care of the horse he had given me** : a hit at his friend's meanness. Do you know what horse his friend had given him?

**plausible** : making a show of sincerity, but not genuine.

**to reconcile me to all my follies** : to compensate me for what I had suffered owing to my foolishness.

**harpsichord** : an early form of piano, a stringed musical instrument with a key-board.

## B. APPRECIATION

This is a delightful letter, full of humour and pathos. It reveals much of Goldsmith's character, his weakness and his good points. We get a surprise when we read how his supposed friend treated him, and the contrast between that treatment and the lawyer's hospitality is very pleasing.

## C. ASSIGNMENTS

1. What points of Goldsmith's character are revealed in this letter? Support your answer by quotations.

2. Mention some examples of humour and of irony in this letter.

## NOTES ON THE AUTHORS OF GROUP I

**SIR FRANCIS YOUNGHUSBAND** (1863- ) is a great modern traveller and explorer. He was born at Murree in the Himalayas, and after education in England he joined the Indian Army, in which he rose ultimately to the rank of General. He loved the Himalayas, and took every possible opportunity to explore them, both in his holidays and in connexion with work on the Frontier. His style is graphic and generally simple, and you feel that his reason for having written is his love of adventure and the glories of the mountains that he describes, and his eagerness to share his pleasure with others.

**ALEXANDER KINGLAKE** (1809-1891) was a successful barrister who retired in order to devote himself to travel and literature. He spent a good deal of time in wanderings in the Near East, and the book, *Eothen*, in which he relates his experiences there, is considered to be one of the most brilliant descriptions of eastern travel. He was also a historian, and wrote a *History of the Crimean War* as a result of his personal observation of the campaign in the Crimea.

**OLIVER GOLDSMITH** (1728-1774) was a lover of travel in quite a different way from the explorer Young-husband, and the historian Kinglake. Goldsmith wandered partly because he could not help it, in search of a livelihood, first in one profession, then in another, for all of which, except in writing, he was equally poorly qualified. Even in conversation he was inept, but when he took up his pen, he 'wrote like an angel', and his works of almost every kind, poetry, novel, drama, essays, have outlived in popularity those of most of his contemporaries.



## GROUP II—SCIENCE

### AN ORPHANED BLACKBIRD

#### §1

[KEY-QUESTION: *How had the little bird become an orphan, and how did it try to get food for itself?*]

The bad weather brought to our little plot of ground a young blackbird, who had evidently been thrown upon the world too early in life. A good number of blackbird broods had been brought off in the bushes about us, and in the rough and tumble of those tempestuous days some of the young had no doubt got scattered and lost; this at all events was one that had called and called to be fed and warmed and comforted in vain,—we had heard him calling for days,—and who had now grown prematurely silent, and had soberly set himself to find his own living as best he could. Between the lawn and the sweetbriar hedge there was a strip of loose mould where roses had been planted, and here the bird had discovered that by turning over the dead leaves and loose earth a few small morsels were to be found. During those cold, windy, wet days we observed him there diligently searching in his poor, slow little way. He would strike his beak into the loose ground, making a little hop forward at the same time to give force to the stroke and throw up about as

much earth as would cover a shilling piece ; then he would gaze attentively at the spot, and after a couple of seconds hop and strike again ; and finally, if he could see nothing to eat, he would move on a few inches and begin again in another place. That was all his art—his one poor little way of getting a living ; and it was plain to see from his bedraggled appearance and feeble motions, that he was going the way of most young orphaned birds

## §2

[KEY-QUESTION: *What did the author do to tame the bird and what was the result ?*]

Now, I hate playing at Providence among the creatures, but we cannot be rid of pity ; and there are exceptional cases in which one feels justified in putting out a helping hand. Nature herself is not always careless of the individual life ; or perhaps it would be better to sav with Thoreau, 'We are not wholly involved in Nature.' And anxious to give the poor bird a chance by putting him in a sheltered place, and feeding him up, as Ruskin once did in a like case, I set about catching him, but could not lay hands on him, for he was still able to fly a little, and always managed to escape pursuit among the brambles or else in the sedges by the waterside. Half an hour after being hunted, he would be back on the edge of the lawn prodding the ground in the old feeble, futile way. And the scraps of food I cunningly placed for him he disregarded, not knowing in his ignorance

what was good for him. Then I got a supply of small earthworms, and, stalking him, tossed them so as to cause them to fall near him, and he saw and knew what they were, and swallowed them hungrily; and he saw too that they were thrown to him by a hand, and that the hand was part of that same huge grey-clad monster that had a little while back so furiously hunted him; and at once he seemed to understand the meaning of it all, and instead of flying from he ran to meet us, and recovering his voice, called to be fed. The experience of one day made him a tame bird; on the second day he knew that bread and milk, stewed plums, pie-crust, and, in fact, anything we had to give, was good for him; and in the course of the next two or three days he acquired a useful knowledge of our habits.

Thus, at half-past three in the morning he would begin calling to be fed at the bed-room window. If no notice was taken of him he would go away to try and find something for himself, and return at five o'clock when breakfast was in preparation, and place himself before the kitchen door. Usually he got a small snack then; and at the breakfast hour (six o'clock) he would turn up at the dining-room window and get a substantial meal. Dinner and tea-time—twelve and half-past three o'clock—found him at the same spot; but he was often hungry between meals, and he would then sit before one door or window and call, then move to the next door, and so on until he had been all round the cottage. It was most amusing to see him when, on our return from a

long walk or a day out, he would come to meet us, screaming excitedly, bounding over the lawn with long hops, looking like a miniature very dark-coloured kangaroo.

One day I came back alone to the cottage, and sat down on the lawn in a canvas chair, to wait for my companion who had the key. The blackbird had seen, and came flying to me, and pitching close to my feet began crying to be fed, shaking his wings, and dancing about in a most excited state, for he had been left a good many hours without food, and was very hungry. As I moved not in my chair he presently ran round and began screaming and fluttering on the other side of it, thinking, I suppose, that he had gone to the wrong place, and that by addressing himself to the back of my head he would quickly get an answer.

### §3

[KEY-QUESTION: *Why did the author feel troubled about the consequences of feeding the bird, and how were his fears dispelled ?*]

The action of this bird in coming to be fed naturally attracted a good deal of attention among the feathered people about us; they would look on at a distance, evidently astonished and much puzzled at our bird's boldness in coming to our feet. But nothing dreadful happened to him, and little by little they began to lose their suspicion; and first a robin—the robin is always first—then other blackbirds to the number of seven, then

chaffinches and dunnocks, all began to grow tame and to attend regularly at meal-times to have a share in anything that was going. The most lively, active and quarrelsome member of this company was our now glossy foundling; and it troubled us to think that in feeding him we were but staving off the evil day when he would once more have to fend for himself. Certainly we were teaching him nothing. But our fears were idle. The seven wild blackbirds that had formed a habit of coming to share his food were all young birds, and as time went on and the hedge fruit began to ripen we noticed that they kept more and more together. Whenever one was observed to fly straight away to some distance, in a few moments another would follow, then another; and presently it would be seen that they were all making their way to some spot in the valley or to the woods on the other side. After several hours' absence they would all reappear on the lawn, or near it, at the same time, showing that they had been together throughout the day and had returned in company. After observing them in their comings and goings for several weeks I felt convinced that this species has in it the remains of a gregarious instinct which affects the young birds.

Our bird as a member of this little company, must have quickly picked up from the others all that it was necessary for him to know, and at last it was plain to us from his behaviour at the cottage that he was doing very well for himself. He was often absent most of the day with the others, and on his return late in the afternoon he

would pick over the good things placed for him in a leisurely way, selecting a morsel here and there, and eating more out of compliment to us, as it seemed, than because he was hungry. But up to the very last, when he had grown as hardy and strong on the wings as any of his wild companions, he kept up his acquaintance with and confidence in us; and even at night when I would go out to where most of our wild birds roosted in the trees and bushes growing in a vast old chalk-pit close to the cottage and called 'blackie', instantly there would be a response—a softly chuckled note, like a sleepy 'good-night,' thrown back to me out of the darkness.

WILLIAM HENRY HUDSON  
(From *Hampshire Days*)

## NOTES

### INTRODUCTION

This piece is the story of a baby bird that had lost its parents. It is full of careful observations, which are, after all, the basis on which every science is built. In describing the incident, the writer informs us of many minute details about the habits of birds, yet makes the whole thing interesting and appealing. The matter appears at first sight very commonplace and trifling, but the author has made it very attractive.

### A. COMPREHENSION

#### §1. **The orphaned bird tries to find food for itself**

#### KEY-QUESTION

'How had the little bird become an orphan, and how did it try to get food for itself?'

## EXPLANATIONS

**thrown upon the world:** forced to depend upon itself for food, having been deprived of the help of its parents.

**brought off:** successfully achieved, i.e. hatched.

**rough and tumble:** (nouns) confusion likely to cause injury.

**prematurely silent:** silent before the right time. (Grown-up creatures are expected to endure difficulties in silence; young ones naturally cry out for help.)

**morsels:** tiny bits (of food).

**He would strike . . . . another** . . . . . **note how**  
carefully the author has ob- . . . . . **detail of**  
the bird's action.)

**bedraggled:** wet, untidy.

**the way of most young orphaned birds:** the way towards death; (most young birds left in that condition die of starvation).

## §2. The bird becomes tame and calls to be fed

## KEY-QUESTION

'What did the author do to tame the bird, and what was the result?'

## EXPLANATIONS

**playing at Providence:** God is supposed to be the provider of food and shelter to all creatures, so if a man does it instead, he may be said to be playing the part of God.

**Nature . . . . involved in Nature:** the purpose of Nature seems to be to produce the most highly adaptable type of living creature, through the processes of Evolution (see the extract from Darwin, in this Group). But, in the process, millions of individuals seem to live and die uselessly. The few that seem to be specially protected by a lucky fate must therefore either be exceptions or, perhaps (as

suggested in the quotation from Thoreau) Man, in whom intelligence has been evolved to a far greater extent than in any other creature, can overcome Nature to some extent by his intelligence and will.

**Thoreau:** a great American writer of the 19th century. He retired from society to live a simple and solitary life in the woods, and his most famous book, *Walden* is an account of his experience of that kind of life.

**Ruskin:** (see Group VI).

**stalking him:** pursuing him stealthily.

**that same huge . . . monster:** a humorous description of the author as he would appear from the bird's point of view.

**stewed plums:** cooked fruit.

**pie-crust:** the baked outer part of a special dish called a pie.

**snack:** a small hurried meal, a few fragments of food.

### §3. The bird gradually learns to look after itself

#### KEY-QUESTION

'Why did the author feel troubled about the consequences of feeding the bird, and how were his fears dispelled?'

#### EXPLANATIONS

**the feathered people:** the birds.

**robin:** a very common small bird in England. (It is often called the 'red-breast' because of the red colouring of its breast feathers.)

**chaffinches, dunnocks:** other small birds.

**glossy:** shining (because now well-fed and healthy).

**foundling:** a deserted infant of unknown parents.

**staving off:** postponing.

**fend:** provide.

**gregarious instinct:** a natural desire to remain in the society of others.

**out of compliment:** as an act of courtesy.



**roosted**: settled down for sleep (only used of birds).

## B. APPRECIATION

This little story of the young blackbird is beautifully told, and the exact details show that the author was a scientist as well as a fine writer. Careful noting of significant details is necessary for any good descriptive writing. Here we feel the author's love for birds in every word he writes about them and who can fail to be moved by the human touch in the last three lines?

Of Hudson's style Professor Ward says that he can make a page of English prose as satisfying and refreshing as a stretch of English downland lying still and calm in the pale golden light of a late autumn evening.

## C. ASSIGNMENTS

1. Find in this piece an example of the 'inductive' method of science, i.e. the drawing of a general inference from particular instances based on accurate observations.

2. Describe any incident in the life of an animal which you have observed carefully (e.g. ants, dogs, horses, squirrels, sparrows).

3. Discuss the statement 'We are not wholly involved in Nature'.

# THE METHOD OF SCIENCE

## §1

[KEY-QUESTION: *What is the chief difference between the mental processes of a scientist and those of an ordinary man?*]

The method of scientific investigation is nothing but the expression of the necessary mode of work

ing of the human mind. It is simply the mode in which all phenomena are reasoned about, rendered precise and exact. There is just the same kind of difference, between the mental operations of a man of science and those of an ordinary person, as there is between the operations and methods of a baker or of a butcher weighing out his goods in common scales, and the operations of a chemist in performing a difficult and complex analysis by means of his balance and finely graduated weights. It is not that the action of the scales in the one case, and the balance in the other, differ in the principles of their construction or manner of working; but the beam of one is set on an infinitely finer axis than the other, and of course turns by the addition of a much smaller weight.

You will understand this better, perhaps, if I give you some familiar examples. You have all heard it repeated, I daresay, that men of science work by means of Induction and Deduction, and that by the help of these operations, they, in a sort of sense, wring from Nature certain other things, which are called Natural Laws and Causes, and that out of these, by some cunning skill of their own, they build up Hypotheses and Theories. And it is imagined by many, that the operations of the common mind can be by no means compared with these processes, and that they have to be acquired by a sort of special apprenticeship to the craft. To hear all these large words, you would think that the mind of a man of science must be constituted differently from that of his fellow-men; but if you will not be frightened by

terms, you will discover that you are quite wrong, and that all these terrible apparatus are being used by yourselves every day and every hour of your life.

There is a well-known incident in one of Molière's plays, where the author makes the hero express unbounded delight on being told that he had been talking prose during the whole of his life. In the same way, I trust, that you will take comfort, and be delighted with yourselves, on the discovery that you have been acting on the principles of inductive and deductive philosophy during the same period. Probably there is not one here who has not in the course of the day had occasion to set in motion a complex train of reasoning, of the very same kind, though differing of course in degree, as that which a scientific man goes through in tracing the causes of natural phenomena.

## §2

[KEY-QUESTION: *What scientific processes of reasoning are employed in establishing the Natural Law that all hard and green apples are sour ?*]

A very trivial circumstance will serve to exemplify this. Suppose you go into a fruiterer's shop, wanting an apple,—you take up one, and, on biting it, you find it is sour; you look at it, and see that it is hard and green. You take up another one, and that too is hard, green and sour. The shop-man offers you a third; but, before biting it, you examine it, and find that it is hard

and green, and you immediately say that you will not have it, as it must be sour, like those you have already tried.

Nothing can be more simple than that, you think ; but if you will take the trouble to analyse and trace out into its logical elements what has been done by the mind, you will be greatly surprised. In the first place, you have performed the operation of Induction. You found that, in two experiences, hardness and greenness in apples went together with sourness. It was so in the first case and it was confirmed by the second. True, it is a very small basis, but still it is enough to make an induction from ; you generalize the fact and you expect to find sourness in apples where you get hardness and greenness. You found upon that a general law, that all hard and green apples are sour ; and that so far as it goes is a perfect induction. Well, now, suppose, having got your law, that at some time afterwards, you are discussing the qualities of apples with a friend ; you will say to him, 'It is a very curious thing,—but I find that all hard and green apples are sour !' Your friend says to you, 'But how do you know that ?' You at once reply, 'Oh, because I have tried them over and over again, and have always found them to be so.'

Well, if we were talking science instead of common sense, we should call that an Experimental Verification. And, if still opposed, you go further, and say, 'I have heard from the people in Somersetshire and Devonshire, where a large number of apples are grown, that they have observed the

same thing. It is also found to be the case in Normandy, and in North America. In short, I find it to be the universal experience of mankind wherever attention has been directed to the subject.' Whereupon, your friend, unless he is a very unreasonable man, agrees with you, and is convinced that you are quite right in the conclusion you have drawn. He believes, although perhaps he does not know he believes it, that the more extensive verifications are,—that the more frequently experiments have been made, and results of the same kind arrived at,—that the more varied the conditions under which the same results are attained, the more certain is the ultimate conclusion, and he disputes the question no further. He sees that the experiment has been tried under all sorts of conditions, as to time, place, and people, with the same result; and he says with you, therefore, that the law you have laid down must be a good one, and he must believe it.

In science we do the same thing;—the philosopher exercises precisely the same faculties, though in a much more delicate manner. In scientific enquiry it becomes a matter of duty to expose the supposed law to every possible kind of verification and to take care moreover, that this is done intentionally, and not left to a mere accident, as in the case of the apples. And in science, as in common life, our confidence in a law is in exact proportion to the absence of variation in the result of our experimental verifications.

For instance, if you let go your grasp of an article you may have in your hand, it will immedi-

ately fall to the ground. That is a very common verification of one of the best established laws of nature—that of gravitation. The method by which men of science established the existence of that law is exactly the same as that by which we have established the trivial proposition about the sourness of hard and green apples. But we believe it in such an extensive, thorough and unhesitating manner because the universal experience of mankind verifies it, and we can verify it ourselves at any time ; and that is the strongest possible foundation on which any natural law can rest.

THOMAS HENRY HUXLEY

(From *Essays*)

## NOTES

### INTRODUCTION

From this extract you will see how even difficult scientific processes can be explained in a simple manner by a master-mind. Huxley had that great gift: and it was he who popularized the work of Darwin, so that nowadays no educated person is altogether unfamiliar with the Darwinian theory of Natural Selection (see the extract from Darwin, which follows on this). To be able to explain a difficult matter clearly, one must have a perfect grasp of it oneself. Notice how thoroughly at home Huxley is with the subject on which he is writing here. He has every idea clear in his own mind. It should be the same with you when you write an essay. Clear thinking results in clear writing.

**A. COMPREHENSION****§1. Comparison between the mental processes of a scientist and those of an ordinary man****KEY-QUESTION**

'What is the chief difference between the mental processes of the scientist and those of an ordinary man?'

**EXPLANATIONS**

**The method . . . precise and exact:** the method of science is just the same as the method of ordinary reasoning, but it is more accurate.

**complex analysis:** a difficult investigation of the substances of which a thing is composed.

**finely graduated weights:** if you look at a chemical balance you will see that some of the weights are very small indeed, so that the minutest variations in weight can be observed.

**beam . . . axis:** the cross-bar or horizontal bar of the balance is called the 'beam'. This is supported exactly at its middle point by a knife-like edge, called the 'axis'.

**Induction and Deduction:** these principles are clearly explained in the latter part of this piece. Sir Francis Bacon, one of whose famous essays you will read in Group VI, was one of the first men in the western world to recognize the importance of the inductive method for the purpose of reaching accurate scientific conclusions. That is why he is sometimes called the 'Father of modern Experimental Science'. Before his time the tendency (under the influence of orthodox religion) was for people to try to explain the facts of nature according to the theories given in holy books. Induction works the other way round: it first collects the facts from repeated observations and experiments, and then forms a theory to explain the facts. You have a good example of this in Hudson's remark about 'gregarious instinct' in Section 3 of the extract preceding this.

**wring**: extract by pressure.

**Natural Laws and Causes**: the 'laws' of Nature are not laws in the same sense as are the man-made laws of a country. Man-made laws are rules which tell us what we may or may not do. Natural laws are explanations of the causes of things.

**Hypotheses and Theories**: when a new set of facts is observed, the scientist tries to explain it according to the known Natural Laws; such an explanation is called a hypothesis or theory until it is proved or disproved by repeated experiments and observations.

**apprenticeship to the craft**: in a skilled trade or craft a man cannot become a master-workman until he has completed a period of training and practice as an apprentice or learner.

**terrible**: frightening. (Or it may be regarded as spoken ironically.)

**Molière**: a famous French dramatist of the 17th century. The point of the joke is that ignorant people are awed or frightened by unfamiliar words, and delighted at finding out that they can do something which they had previously imagined could only be done by learned men. Of course everyone speaks prose, just as, in the present case, Huxley shows that everyone uses the processes of induction and deduction in reasoning.

**phenomenon** (plural, phenomena): observed or apparent fact.

## §2. Induction and Deduction explained

### KEY-QUESTION

'What scientific methods of reasoning are employed in establishing the Natural Law that all hard and green apples are sour?'

### EXPLANATIONS

**generalize**: make a general statement on, i.e. instead of applying the statement to a single fact



that a particular green apple is sour, you apply it to all instances, saying that all green apples are sour.

**talking science**: using scientific terms.

**experimental verification**: proving by experiment whether a hypothesis is true or not.

**Somersetshire, Devonshire**: parts of England in which apples are grown extensively. They are also grown in Normandy, France, and in North America.

**He believes . . . further**: he believes that the proof will be more certain when (a) verification has been carried out on a large scale, (b) verification has been carried out frequently with the same result each time, and (c) verification has been carried out under varied conditions with the same result in each case.

**In scientific enquiry it becomes a matter of duty**: because it is not scientific to base conclusions on unverified statements. And, because it is regarded as a duty, it is done with deliberate intention.

**our confidence in law . . . experimental verifications**: the more frequently a law has been verified by getting the same result from experiments, the more sure we are that it is true.

## B. APPRECIATION

This is an ideal piece of lucid prose, because it perfectly fulfils the purpose for which it was written. The author aimed simply at making his difficult subject clear and interesting to the ordinary reader without scientific training; that is why he used homely illustrations and took care to explain his argument step by step in such detail.

## C. ASSIGNMENTS

1. Explain the process of Induction by means of an example not found in this book.

2. Write a short composition on 'Science in Daily Life'.

3. When the villager was told by the doctor that his grandmother had died of 'cessation of the pulsation of the heart' he was very much impressed. What is the absurdity in this?

## THE EFFECTS OF USE AND DISUSE

### §1

[KEY-QUESTION: *What examples does Darwin give here in order to prove that 'use in our domestic animals strengthens and enlarges certain parts and disuse diminishes them' ?*]

I think there can be little doubt that use in our domestic animals strengthens and enlarges certain parts, and disuse diminishes them; and that such modifications are inherited. Under free nature, we can have no standard of comparison, by which to judge of the effects of long-continued use or disuse, for we know not the parent-forms; but many animals have structures which can be explained by the effects of disuse. As Professor Owen has remarked, there is no greater anomaly in nature than a bird that cannot fly; yet there are several in this state. The logger-headed duck of South America can only flap along the surface of the water, and has its wings in nearly the same condition as the domestic duck. As the larger ground-feeding birds seldom take flight except to escape danger, I believe that the nearly wingless condition of several birds, which now inhabit or

have lately inhabited several Oceanic islands, tenanted by no beast of prey, has been caused by disuse. The ostrich indeed inhabits continents and is exposed to danger from which it cannot escape by flight, but by kicking it can defend itself from enemies, as well as any of the smaller quadrupeds. We may imagine that the early progenitor of the ostrich had habits like those of a bustard, and that as natural selection increased in successive generations the size and weight of its body, its legs were used more, and its wings less, until they became incapable of flight.

## §2

[KEY-QUESTION: *What is the theory of Natural Selection and how does it explain the wingless condition of the beetles of Madeira?*]

In some cases we might easily put down to disuse modifications of structure which are wholly, or mainly, due to natural selection. Mr. Wollaston has discovered the remarkable fact that 200 beetles, out of the 550 species inhabiting Madeira, are so far deficient in wings that they cannot fly; and that of the twenty-nine indigenous families no less than twenty-three genera have all their species in this condition! Several facts, namely, that beetles in many parts of the world are frequently blown to sea and perish; that the beetles in Madeira, as observed by Mr. Wollaston, lie much concealed, until the wind lulls and the sun shines; that the proportion of wingless beetles is larger on the exposed desert tracts than in Madeira

itself ; and especially the extraordinary fact, so strongly insisted on by Mr. Wollaston, of the almost entire absence of certain large groups of beetles, elsewhere excessively numerous, which groups have habits of life almost necessitating frequent flight ; all these considerations have made me believe that the wingless condition of so many Madeira beetles is mainly due to the action of natural selection, but combined probably with disuse. For during thousands of successive generations each individual beetle which flew least either from its wings having been ever so little less perfectly developed, or from indolent habit, will have had the best chance of surviving from not being blown out to sea ; and, on the other hand, those beetles which most readily took to flight would oftenest have been blown to sea and thus have been destroyed.

The insects in Madeira which are not ground-feeders, and which, as the flower-feeding beetles and butterflies, must habitually use their wings to gain their subsistence, have, as Mr. Wollaston suspects, their wings not at all reduced but even enlarged. This is quite in accordance with the action of natural selection. For when a new insect first arrived on the island, the tendency of natural selection to enlarge or to reduce the wings would depend on whether a greater number of individuals were saved by successfully battling with the winds, or by giving up the attempt and rarely or never flying. As with mariners shipwrecked near a coast, it would have been better for the good swimmers if they had been able to swim

still further, whereas it would have been better for the bad swimmers if they had not been able to swim at all and had stuck to the wreck.

### §3

[KEY-QUESTION : *Why have moles lost their eyes ?*  
*Why have cave-crabs lost theirs ?*]

The eyes of moles and of some burrowing rodents are rudimentary in size, and in some cases are quite covered up by skin and fur. This state of the eyes is probably due to gradual reduction from disuse, but aided perhaps by natural selection. In South America, a burrowing rodent, the tuco-tuco, is even more subterranean in its habits than the mole ; and I was assured by a Spaniard, who had often caught them, that they are frequently blind ; one which I kept alive was certainly in this condition ; the cause, as appeared on dissection, having been inflammation of the inner portion of the eyelids. As frequent inflammation of the eyes must be injurious to any animal, and as eyes are certainly not indispensable to animals with subterranean habits, a reduction in their size with the adhesion of the eyelids and growth of fur over them, might in such case be an advantage. And if so, natural selection would constantly aid the effects of disuse.

It is well known that several animals, belonging to the most different classes, which inhabit the caves of Styria and of Kentucky, are blind. In some of the crabs the foot-stalk for the eye remains, though the eye is gone ; the stand for the

telescope is there, though the telescope with its glasses has been lost. As it is difficult to imagine that eyes, though useless, could be in any way injurious to animals living in darkness, I attribute their loss wholly to disuse. In one of the blind animals, namely, the cave-rat, the eyes are of immense size ; and Professor Silliman thought that it regained, after living some days in the light, some slight power of vision. In the same manner as in Madeira the wings of some of the insects have been enlarged, and the wings of others have been reduced by natural selection aided by use and disuse, so in the case of the cave-rat natural selection seems to have struggled with the loss of light and to have increased the size of the eyes ; whereas, with all the other inhabitants of the caves, disuse by itself seems to have done its work.

CHARLES DARWIN

(From *To The Students*)

## NOTES

### INTRODUCTION

Charles Darwin, the famous exponent of the theory of 'the origin of species', excelled in 'noticing things which easily escape attention, and in observing them carefully', a faculty indispensable for scientific work. This passage from his great work *On the Origin of Species* is a good illustration both of the care with which he observed minute details and of the clear and exact manner in which he described them and the inferences he drew from his observations.

## A. COMPREHENSION

## §1. The theory, and some simple examples of it

## KEY-QUESTION

'What examples does Darwin give here in order to prove that "use in our domestic animals strengthens and enlarges certain parts, and disuse diminishes them"?'

## EXPLANATIONS

**under free nature:** in the wild condition, as opposed to the condition of animals or plants that have been domesticated or cultivated by man.

**we know not the parent-forms:** the original forms of animals, from which our present animals are descended, are extinct, so we cannot compare them with the present animals and observe the differences.

**such modifications are inherited:** the changes in the structure of the animals, caused by use or disuse of certain parts, are reproduced in their descendants.

**logger-headed duck:** a kind of duck with a very large head. The ordinary wild duck can fly, but the domestic duck has lost the use of its wings because it seldom has need to use them. Similarly birds such as penguins ('birds which . . . inhabit . . . Oceanic islands') have lost the use of their wings because the places where they live (Arctic and Antarctic shores) are 'tenanted by no beast of prey', so they never have to fly from danger.

**bustard:** known in parts of India as *Houbara*. It can still use its wings for flight, though it lives mostly on the ground.

**natural selection:** this is the name given to another of Darwin's important theories. It is explained in the next section. It should be clearly distinguished from the theory of modification by use and disuse.

**§2. The theory of natural selection, and how it combines with that of modification by use and disuse to explain certain cases**

**KEY-QUESTION**

'What is the theory of Natural Selection, and how does it explain the wingless condition of the beetles of Madeira?'

**\* EXPLANATIONS**

**Madeira**: an island off the N.-W. coast of Africa.

**genera**: scientists classify plants and animals by grouping together all those which have certain similarities of general structure; such groups are called '**genera**' or families (Latin: '**genus**' = a family; plural, '**genera**'). Thus all the wolf-like animals, such as wolves, dogs, jackals, etc. belong to one '**genus**'. These '**genera**' are then sub-divided into '**species**', e.g. the wolf, dog, jackal species, and there may be many different varieties in each species (e.g. different '**breeds**' of dogs).

**all these considerations have made me believe etc.**: the explanation is given in the following sentence, which should be studied carefully.

**had the best chance of surviving**: owing to this, the theory is sometimes known as the theory of 'the survival of the fittest', but its correct name is 'Natural Selection', which implies that Nature selects or preserves alive those individuals who happen to be best adapted to the local conditions (e.g. the beetles which cannot fly so well are saved from being blown out to sea), and, as they reproduce their characteristics in their descendants, while the others perish, the whole species gradually gets modified. It will be seen that this is quite a different cause of modification from that which is caused by disuse. But the two causes combine sometimes, as shown clearly in the next section.

**the insects . . . which are not ground-feeders**: this is another example of Natural



Selection. Here, those which *cannot* fly well will starve to death. So, naturally, there is a gradual selection or survival of the strong-winged ones only.

**For when a new insect first arrived etc. :** if more insects were saved by flying, then the strong-winged ones would survive and reproduce their kind: but if more were saved by taking refuge on the ground, then the weak-winged ones would increase. The comparison with the shipwrecked mariners is a very nice one.

**§3. Two examples, one in which Natural Selection and Disuse combine to cause modifications, and the other in which Disuse alone has operated**

#### KEY-QUESTION

'Why have moles lost their eyes? Why have cave-crabs lost theirs?'

#### EXPLANATIONS

**moles . . . burrowing rodents :** moles are little rat-like animals that make holes in the ground (burrows) and live there. They are 'rodents', i.e. their teeth are suited for cutting and gnawing, like those of rats and squirrels, not for grinding like those of horses, or tearing, like those of cats.

**rudimentary :** undeveloped or under-developed.

**a reduction in their size . . . . . might be an advantage :** the possession of eyes might be a disadvantage to a subterranean animal (i.e. one which lives under-ground), because the eyes would not only be useless in the dark, but might get sore through the dirt getting into them; so the animals with small eyes and fur nearly covering them would tend to survive better than those with large eyes. This is the working of *Natural Selection*. And, at the same time, the eyes would tend to become sightless and disappear through *Disuse*. So *both* factors operate in this case.

**caves of Styria and Kentucky:** Styria, in southern Austria. Kentucky, in the U.S.A.

**the foot-stalk:** the eyes of crabs are at the end of a sort of rod which the animal can push out when it wants to see. The cave-crab has lost the eye through having no use for it in the darkness, but the rod remains.

**the cave-rat:** in this case the eyes seem not to have been entirely useless, otherwise they would have been lost by disuse. Natural selection has caused those with the largest eyes to survive.

## B. APPRECIATION

Darwin's is a clear, straightforward style, well suited to its purpose. Even when he employs figures of speech, he does so (as in the simile of the shipwrecked mariners, and the metaphor of the telescope) with the object of clarifying his subject, rather than of merely adorning it.

## C ASSIGNMENTS

1. State in the simplest possible terms the theory of '**Natural Selection**', and that of '**Variation caused by Use and Disuse**'. Illustrate by giving examples of each.

2. Give an example in which variation has been caused by a combination of the two causes, natural selection and disuse.

## NOTES ON AUTHORS OF GROUP II

**WILLIAM HENRY HUDSON** (1841-1922) was born in South America and lived in that country until he was thirty-three, when he came to live in London. He suffered greatly from ill-health and poverty. He spent his life in observing Nature and human beings, and on writing books in which his observations are recorded minutely and with great understanding. He was intensely interested in bird-

life and wrote books on British birds and on birds of the La Plata (South America).

THOMAS HENRY HUXLEY (1825-1895), though he was the son of a schoolmaster, received hardly any education except what he got for himself. He took up the study of medicine, qualified himself and was appointed as surgeon on a ship which went to do survey work off the Australian coast. This gave him an opportunity to do research on the marine life of the tropics and he soon rose to fame by the brilliance of his scientific studies. When Darwin published *The Origin of Species* in 1859, Huxley was deeply impressed by it and became the chief defender and propagandist of Darwin's views, which involved him in much controversy with the upholders of orthodox Christianity. His fine clear style was admirable for the purpose of teaching and argument.

CHARLES ROBERT DARWIN (1809-1882) was a great scientist who could also write delightfully. Even as a boy he was interested in collecting specimens, and as a medical student at Edinburgh he was more interested in Natural History than in medicine. The invitation, in 1851, to accompany the British surveying expedition to South America, in H.M.S. *Beagle*, was the turning-point in his life, for it gave him the opportunity of making investigations which ultimately led to his enunciation of the theory of Evolution by Natural Selection which has revolutionized all modern thought. Fortunately he had money of his own and had no need to earn a living; so the remainder of his life was given up to further researches and to the verification and explanation of his views.

## GROUP III—OPEN-AIR LIFE

### AN OPEN-AIR SCHOOL

#### . §1

[KEY-QUESTION: *Why cannot words give us a complete picture of Shantiniketan ?*]

If I were to make a full confession to you at this present moment, here in Central Africa, and were to tell you what is in my inmost heart, you would find, hidden deep down there, an inextinguishable longing to be away from the tumult and the strife of tongues in which, for months past, my life seems to have become involved,—whether in the Punjab, or in Africa, and to be back again once more, beneath the *sal*-trees and the mango-groves of Shantiniketan, where the children sing their songs and play their games and do their work ; where the spirit of peace and beauty reigns supreme ; where the open sky is spread out overhead, in all its infinite mystery, with its sunrises and sunsets, with its full-moonlit beauty at night and those wonderful dark purple evenings, when the stars come out one by one and seem to stoop down to earth to whisper their secrets into the ears of mortal men.

Words cannot picture to you the beauty of Shantiniketan. Our own Poet and Teacher, whom we call *Gurudeva*, has named it in his song ‘The darling of our hearts’ ; and it is worthy of

the name. All who have visited the *ashram*, old and young alike, have felt its inner beauty growing more and more upon them.

I feel sure, in my own mind, that the presence of the spirits of such saintly lives as those of Maharishi Devendranath Tagore, the father of the poet, who lived in the *ashram* during most of the closing years of his life ; and of the poet's eldest brother, the philosopher and sage, Dwijen-dranath Tagore, who is living there still, in his old age, I feel sure, that the spiritual presence of these lives pervades our *ashram*, even when the bodily form departs. We find in England, in the beautiful valley where the ruined walls of Tintern Abbey still remain, something of this same sacredness which can be almost felt, a beauty of the inner world as well as of the outer scene.

## §2

[KEY-QUESTION : *Why is the site of Shantiniketan regarded as sacred ?*]

There are stories already told about Shantiniketan, which will one day be legends of the Bengal village people,—how the Maharishi, long years ago, came to the spot just as the sun was setting ; how he sat beneath the two *chattim*-trees, which were covered with white flowering creepers, and meditated upon God, while night came down over the open plain. When the moon appeared in all her splendour, he was still rapt in prayer. At the time of the golden morning sunrise, the Maharishi was still seated, his heart all through

the wakeful night filled to overflowing with the joy of the love of God. He said to himself, 'This is my place of rest, the end of my pilgrimage.' And he remained there, year after year. He gave to the spot its present name, Shantiniketan, the home of peace.

Another story runs, how the captain of a robber-band came to the place, thinking that some *sadhu* had secretly buried there a hidden treasure : and when he saw the peace and heavenly radiance of the Maharishi's face, he fell at his feet and asked forgiveness and became the Maharishi's disciple.

Such stories give their own inner meaning. They make known to us the fact that resting-places of the saints of God are hallowed by the presence of immortal joy. As the Upanishads have said : 'God manifests Himself in immortal forms of joy,' that joy which is Love's ultimate expression.

### §3

#### [KEY-QUESTION :<sup>1</sup>]

If I were to describe to you one day in the *ashram* with the boys, that would perhaps best bring home to you its inner beauty. Long before sunrise, like the birds in our own *amlaki*-groves, our boys are awake. The choristers are the first to rise, and they go round the *ashram*, singing their morning hymn. You can hear the voices

<sup>1</sup> To be supplied by the student, as an exercise.

in the distance, drawing nearer and nearer, and then the sound dies away as the choir passes on to another part of the *ashram*, and then again it comes nearer and nearer. The beauty of the sound in the silent morning air, and the sense of joy and reverence which it brings, give peace to the soul.

After an interval, each boy takes his *asan*, his square of carpet, into the fields, and sits down on it to meditate in his own place alone. Later on, before the school-work begins, the boys all stand together in the shade of the trees and sing their hymn to God.

Till about half-past ten, the work of the school goes on. We have no class-rooms. The boys sit with their teachers, in the open-air, under the trees. There are no large classes. A group of eight or ten boys will be seated round the teacher, asking him questions. Very few books are used. Like the education which Plato loved in Athens, the greater part is carried on through conversation. The boys soon learn to open out all their difficulties to their teachers; and the teachers get keenly interested in the boys' questions and answers. Such living education can never be dull.

When the morning work is over the boys bathe and go to their meal. About two o'clock in the afternoon the school classes begin again; but at this time the work is chiefly with the hand as well as with the mind. Handiwork is practised, and a boy's own natural tastes are very soon discovered. Some prefer carpentry; others prefer mechanical work; others enjoy spinning and weav-

ing; others become skilled draughtsmen or painters; others are musicians.

There is very little book-work in the afternoon. School is over at about four o'clock, and then there is a rush to get first into the great open fields for football. Our Shantiniketan boys are famous everywhere for their sports and games. In the evening, at sunset, they return from the fields and sit down once more, for a short time to meditate in silence.

As night comes on, fairy-stories are told; short dramas are recited; our Gurudeva's songs are sung; and the different school-gatherings are held.

By nine o'clock, all are glad to retire to rest; and again the choristers go round the *ashram* singing their last evening hymn. There can be no question as to the happiness of the life of our boys. Their faces tell the story of their joy and their freedom. There is no freer life in India than the life of our children at Shantiniketan.

C. F. ANDREWS

(From *To The Students*)

## NOTES

### INTRODUCTION

The school here described is Shantiniketan, the famous school of India's poet-laureate, Rabindranath Tagore. It is situated at Bolpur, a quiet village about 100 miles from Calcutta. The country around it is open, and the school is situated in one of the most beautiful spots, full of trees and flowers. Try to form a mental picture of such a school, and note the points in which it differs from other schools. This should set you thinking why



a great poet spends all his money and most of his time in doing work of this kind. The author of this piece, Mr. C. F. Andrews, is one of the poet's closest friends and helpers: this description of Shantiniketan is taken from one of his lectures, delivered in Africa, where he went to help the Indians living there.

## A. COMPREHENSION

### §1. A word-picture of Shantiniketan

#### KEY-QUESTION

'Why cannot words give us a complete picture of Shantiniketan?'

#### EXPLANATIONS

**strife of tongues:** argument. Mr. Andrews went to Africa to plead the cause of the Indians who have settled there

**spirit of peace:** Shantiniketan means 'abode of peace'.

**infinite mystery:** we know very little about the stars.

**purple evenings:** the landscape looks purple in the twilight.

**Gurudeva:** the name by which his intimate friends call Rabindranath Tagore.

**inner beauty:** the spirit of the place, which is felt in one's heart but cannot be described.

**Maharishi:** a title for a saintly person.

**spiritual presence:** it is believed that good men fill their neighbourhood with an invisible influence, which lasts after their death.

**Tintern Abbey:** one of the old monasteries destroyed by the order of King Henry VIII; it is situated in an exceptionally lovely valley, on the bank of the river Wye in the west of England. Many of the monks were no doubt saintly men.

**the inner world:** that which cannot be seen, the spiritual.

**§2. How the spot was discovered****KEY-QUESTION**

'Why is the place on which Shantiniketan stands regarded as sacred?'

**EXPLANATIONS**

**pilgrimage** : (metaphor) life is compared to a pilgrimage.

**heavenly radiance** : the faces of holy men are supposed to shine with spiritual light.

**God manifests . . . . . expression** : the presence of God is indicated by the lasting joy which a place or person is able to give, and such joy is the mark of perfect Love.

**§3. A day at Shantiniketan**

[**KEY-QUESTION :<sup>1</sup>**]

**EXPLANATIONS**

**choristers** : those who sing in chorus, i.e. all together.

**choir** : (pronounced 'quire'), a group of choristers.

**meditate** : concentrate the mind, think deeply. (Here it means to concentrate the mind upon God, or upon some ideal.)

**hymn** : sacred song.

**no classrooms** : that is why Shantiniketan is called an 'open-air' school.

**the education which Plato loved in Athens** : Plato was a pupil of the great Greek philosopher Socrates, who taught chiefly by conversation and asking questions, not by books. You will find a Socratic dialogue in Group VII of this book, from which you can understand the method of teaching.

<sup>1</sup> The student should supply the Key-Question here as an exercise.

**living education** : education by means of the events of daily life (e.g. conversations, observations, walks) rather than by books.

**handiwork** : skilful work with the hands, such as weaving, carpentry etc.

**draughtsmen** : those who draw and sketch.

**Gurudeva's songs** : Rabindranath Tagore's Bengali poems are sung throughout Bengal. His most famous book is **Gitanjali**, which he has translated into English also. He has written dramas and stories too. One of his stories you will find in this book, in Group X.

## B. APPRECIATION

The simplicity of its language give beauty and dignity to this piece. The straightforward way in which each striking point about Shantiniketan is described makes it live in your imagination more vividly than it would if described in flowery and oratorical speech.

This is the kind of language you should use in your descriptive essays, but it is not easy unless you are as keen on your subject as Mr. Andrews is on his.

## C. ASSIGNMENTS

1. Do you know of any other place where 'something of this same sacredness . . . can be almost felt'? Describe it briefly, in simple language.

2. How did Shantiniketan get its name?

3. 'Such living education can never be dull'. Explain this, and mention some advantages of this kind of education over the kind of education you get in ordinary schools. Are there any disadvantages?

4. What is the use of doing handiwork?

5. 'There is no freer life in India than the life of our children at Shantiniketan.' Explain this. In

what way are the children free, in contrast to other children? Is there no discipline there?

## A GREEN CARAVANSERAI

## § I

[KEY-QUESTION: *What made Stevenson feel that the encampment was 'secure and private like a room'?*]

From Bleynard after dinner, although it was already late, I set out to scale a portion of the Lozère. An ill-marked stony drove-road guided me forward; and I met nearly half-a-dozen bullock-carts descending from the woods, each laden with a whole pine-tree for the winter's firing. At the top of the woods, which do not climb very high upon this cold ridge, I struck leftward by a path among the pines, until I hit on a dell of green turf, where a streamlet made a little spout over some stones to serve me for a water-tap. 'In a more sacred or sequestered bower . . . nor nymph nor faunus haunted.' The trees were not old, but they grew thickly round the glade: there was no outlook, except north-eastward upon distant hill-tops, or straight upward to the sky; and the encampment felt secure and private like a room. By the time I had made my arrangements and fed Modestine, the day was already beginning to decline. I buckled myself to the knees into my sack and made a hearty meal; and as soon as the sun went down I pulled my cap over my eyes and fell asleep.

## §2

[KEY-QUESTION: *What points of contrast did he notice between sleeping out-of-doors and sleeping in the inn?*]

Night is a dead monotonous period under a roof ; but in the open world it passes lightly, wit' its stars and dews and perfumes, and the hours are marked by changes in the face of Nature. What seems a kind of temporal death to people choked between walls and curtains, is only a light and living slumber to the man who sleeps afield. All night long he can hear Nature breathing deeply and freely ; even as she takes her rest, she turns and smiles ; and there is one stirring hour unknown to those who dwell in houses when a wakeful influence goes abroad over the sleeping hemisphere, and all the outward world are on their feet. It is then that the cock first crows, not this time to announce the dawn, but like a cheerful watchman speeding the course of night. Cattle awake on the meadows ; sheep break their fast on dewy hill-sides, and change to a new lair among the ferns ; and houseless men, who have lain down with the fowls, open their dim eyes and behold the beauty of the night. . . .

When that hour came to me among the pines I wakened thirsty. My tin was standing by me half full of water. I emptied it at a draught ; and feeling broad awake after this internal cold aspersions, sat upright to make a cigarette. The stars were clear, coloured, and jewel-like, but not frosty. A faint silver vapour stood for the Milky

Way. All around me the black firpoints stood upright and stock-still. By the whiteness of the pack-saddle, I could see Modestine walking round and round at the length of her tether ; I could hear her steadily munching at the sward ; but there was not another sound, save the indescribable quiet talk of the runnel over the stones. I lay lazily smoking and studying the colour of the sky, as we call the void of space, from where it showed a reddish grey behind the pines to where it showed a glossy blue-black between the stars. As if to be more like a pedlar I wear a silver ring. This I could see faintly shining as I raised or lowered the cigarette ; and at each whiff the inside of my hand was illuminated, and became for a second the highest light in the landscape.

A faint wind, more like a moving coolness than a stream of air, passed down the glade from time to time ; so that even in my great chamber the air was being renewed all night long. I thought with horror of the inn at Chasserades and the congregated night-caps ; with horror of the nocturnal prowesses of clerks and students, of hot theatres and pass-keys and close rooms. I have not often enjoyed a more serene possession of myself, nor felt more independent of material aids. The outer world, from which we cower into our houses seemed after all a gentle habitable place ; and night after night a man's bed, it seemed, was laid and waiting for him in the fields, where God keeps an open house. I thought I had rediscovered one of those truths which are revealed to savages and hid from political economists : at the least, I had

discovered a new pleasure for myself. And yet even while I was exulting in my solitude I became aware of a strange lack. I wished a companion to lie near me in the starlight, silent and not moving, but ever within touch. For there is a fellowship more quiet even than solitude, and which, rightly understood, is solitude made perfect. And to live out of doors with the woman a man loves is of all lives the most complete and free.

As I thus lay, between content and longing, a faint noise stole towards me through the pines. I thought, at first, it was the crowing of cocks or the barking of dogs at some distant farm ; but steadily and gradually it took articulate shape in my ears until I became aware that a passenger was going by upon the high-road in the valley, and singing loudly as he went. There was more of goodwill than grace in his performance ; but he trolled with ample lungs ; and the sound of his voice took hold upon the hillside and set the air shaking in the leafy glens. I have heard people passing by night in sleeping cities ; some of them sang ; one, I remember, played loudly on the bagpipes. I have heard the rattle of a cart or carriage spring up suddenly after hours of stillness, and pass, for some minutes, within the range of my hearing as I lay abed. There is a romance about all who are abroad in the black hours, and with something of a thrill we try to guess their business. But here the romance was double : first, this glad passenger lit internally with wine, who sent up his voice in music through the night ;



*Topical Press Agency*

A PINE FOREST



I drank my water-chocolate, which was hot if it was not rich, and strolled here and there, and up and down about the glade. While I was thus delaying, a gush of steady wind, as long as a heavy sigh, poured direct out of the quarter of the morning. It was cold, and set me sneezing. The trees near at hand tossed their black plumes in its passage ; and I could see the thin distant spires of pine, along the edge of the hill, rock slightly to and fro against the golden east. Ten minutes later, the sunlight spread at a gallop along the hillside, scattering shadows and sparkles, and the day had come completely.

I hastened to prepare my pack and tackle the steep ascent that lay before me ; but I had something on my mind. It was only a fancy ; yet a fancy will sometimes be importunate. I had been most hospitably received and punctually served in my green caravanserai. The room was airy, the water excellent, and the dawn had called me to a moment. I say nothing of the tapestries or the inimitable ceiling, nor yet of the view which I commanded from the windows ; but I felt I was in someone's debt for all this liberal entertainment. And so it pleased me, in a half laughing way, to leave pieces of money on the turf as I went along, until I had left enough for my night's lodging. I trust they did not fall to some rich and churlish drover.

R. L. STEVENSON

(From *Travels with a Donkey*)

## NOTES

## INTRODUCTION

In September, 1876, Stevenson undertook a walking-tour in Southern France, in the mountainous region of the Cevennes. He bought a donkey to carry his baggage, and named it 'Modestine'. He travelled for eleven days, sleeping in the open when it pleased him to do so, and pretending to be a pedlar or wandering seller of small articles, in order to lessen the curiosity of people. The delightful experiences of this journey he afterwards set down in his now famous book *Travels with a Donkey*, from which this piece is taken.

## A. COMPREHENSION

## §1. Stevenson's camping-place

## KEY-QUESTION

'What made him feel that the encampment was "secure and private like a room"?'

## EXPLANATIONS

**Bleymard**: (pronounced 'Blaymar') a village in South France.

**Lozere**: a part of the Cevennes mountains.

**drove-road**: a bridle-path or rough track used by the 'droves' or herds of cattle driven to pasture.

**pin**: these straight trees with peculiar dark green foliage (called 'needles') generally grow on the higher slopes of mountains in temperate climes, or in any cold wet climate. They are found in most of the Indian hill-stations.

**dell**: tiny valley, shaded by trees.

**spout**: jet of liquid.

'In a more sacred . . . haunted': quotation from Milton's great poem *Paradise Lost*, where he describes the bower of Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden.

**sequestered**: secluded, private.

**bower** : glade, shady place under trees.

**nymph . . . faunus** : female and male spirits of the woods. (Being shy of human beings, they always chose secluded spots for their haunts.)

**Modestine** : the name that he gave to the small she-ass that carried his baggage.

**buckled . . . into my sack** : for sleeping out in the open, campers often make a sort of bag of blankets; after getting into it, you fasten yourself in by buckling the straps. This keeps out the cold air. Stevenson put his legs into the sack while he took his food, and afterwards got right into it, to sleep.

## §2. The joys of sleeping out-of-doors

### KEY-QUESTION

'What points of contrast did he notice between sleeping out-of-doors, and sleeping in the inn?'

### EXPLANATIONS

**hours are marked by . . . Nature** : by the change in position of the moon and stars.

**temporal death** : (note that it is 'temporal' not 'temporary') 'temporal' means 'in relation to this world'; sleep is a loss of consciousness of this world, as death also probably is.

**living slumber** : in contrast to 'temporal death'.

**afield** : in the fields or open air.

**As she takes . . . turns and smiles** : Nature is here personified (figure of speech), and spoken of as if it were a person who half wakes from sleep.

**one stirring hour** : it is said that at about 2 a.m. all animals wake up for a short time, and then sleep again. Human beings seem to be subject to the same influence if they sleep out-of-doors; at least Stevenson found it so in his case. It is not known why it happens.

**the sleeping hemisphere:** that half of the globe which is turned away from the sun, and therefore in the dark.

**watchman speeding the course of the night:** the watchman rings his bell or gong to mark the hours.

**fowls:** birds.

**Milky Way:** that part of the sky in which the stars are so numerous that they appear like a continuous patch of brightness against the darkness of space.

**fir-points:** fir-trees have a pointed apex.

**tether:** the rope by which she was tied to prevent her from wandering too far.

**munching at the sward:** eating the grass.

**talk of the runnel:** (metaphor) the little stream running over the stones 'babbled on the pebbles', as a baby talks indistinctly.

**a silver ring:** Stevenson pretended to be a pedlar; these wandering merchants are often gypsies, and wear silver rings.

**the highest light:** the brightest spot of light.

**a moving coolness:** this unusual use of the abstract noun 'coolness' cleverly conveys the idea that the breeze was so slight that it could scarcely be perceived by the senses.

**my great chamber:** my room among the trees.

**inn at Chasserades:** Stevenson had stayed the previous night in the village inn, where he had had to share a room with other people.

**congregated night-caps:** the crowd of people asleep (wearing caps to keep their heads warm).

**nocturnal prowesses . . . close-rooms:** in contrast to the cool sweetness and peace of the night out-of-doors, Stevenson thought of all the unpleasant things associated with night in cities. Nocturnal = nightly. prowess = famous deed of valour; it is used ironically, and probably refers to the way in which students sometimes challenge each other to a contest in drinking. **Pass-keys:** keys which enable

people to enter their houses when the doors have been locked from the inside; such keys would be used by those returning late at night after going to the theatre, etc.

**we cower into our houses:** we are afraid of living out-of-doors, especially at night in a cold climate.

**God keeps an open house:** God offers hospitality. (Compare 'open table' in the character of Goldsmith, Group V, Section 3.)

**truths revealed . . . . . economists:** learned men sometimes overlook simple facts which ordinary people know.

**a companion:** Stevenson was thinking of the lady who afterwards became his wife.

**between content and longing:** content to be alone, yet sometimes wishing for his companion.

**trolled with ample lungs:** sang with the full force of his lungs.

**lit internally:** heated, excited.

### §3. The dawn, and the departure

#### KEY-QUESTION

'How and why did the camper pay for his night's lodging?'

#### EXPLANATIONS

**stronger companions:** the brighter stars.

**glow-worm light:** light no stronger than that of a glow-worm.

**at the water-tap:** at the spout which served as his tap.

**water-chocolate:** chocolate is generally mixed with milk when used for drinking, but Stevenson had only water.

**the quarter of the morning:** the east.

**plumes:** (metaphor) leaves like feathers.

**spires:** pointed conical shapes.

**at a gallop:** (metaphor) as rapidly as a horse galloping.

**importunate:** insisting on a reply, persistent in asking.

**green caravanserai:** Stevenson compares the glade, in which he slept so comfortably, to an inn or serai which provided an airy bedroom, good water, fine surroundings, and punctual service; just as a traveller would willingly pay for these comforts, so he felt he ought to pay; but who was his host? In the same book he put this idea into verse, thus:

'The bed was made, the room was fit,  
By punctual eve the stars were lit;  
The air was still, the water ran;  
No need there was for maid or man,  
When we put up, my ass and I,  
At God's green caravanserai.'

This little poem is worth memorizing; it summarizes the whole story so sweetly and neatly.

**the dawn had called me to a moment:** when a traveller wants to start early, he orders the servant to wake him; in Stevenson's case the dawn did this service punctually, so 'no need there was for maid or man.'

**tapestries:** beautifully embroidered curtains; the surrounding trees were his tapestries, and the sky was his ceiling which no artist could imitate (inimitable).

**churlish drover:** ignorant cowherd.

## B. APPRECIATION

Stevenson's writings, like Goldsmith's, make us feel as if the author were our friend. He seems to take us into his confidence, to be eager to share his feelings and ideas, and sure of understanding. In every line can be felt his sympathy and humanity. He is whimsical, too, and confesses it half shyly, as when he tells how he left money on the grass

in payment for his night's lodging. His style is one of the most picturesque and satisfying, and he took great pains to make it so. His great love of Nature and the open-air gives an added charm to his books.

### C. ASSIGNMENTS

1. What change takes place in Nature at the time of the earliest cock-crow?
2. Why is there 'a romance about all who are abroad in the black hours'?
3. Which events related in this piece stirred the author's feelings deeply, and what feelings did they arouse?
4. Suppose that it had rained on the occasion described: write a humorous continuation of the description of the night in the open air, making use of the comparison with a night's lodging at an inn.
5. Write a short account of any picnic or camp which you have really enjoyed.

## ON GOING A JOURNEY

### §1

[KEY-QUESTION. *Why does Hazlitt prefer to walk in solitude?*]

One of the pleasantest things in the world is going a journey; but I like to go by myself. I can enjoy society in a room; but out-of-doors, nature is company enough for me. I am then never less alone than when alone.

The fields his study, nature was his book.

I cannot see the wit of walking and talking at the same time. When I am in the country, I wish to vegetate like the country. I am not for criticizing hedge-rows and black cattle. I go out

of town in order to forget the town and all that is in it. There are those who for this purpose go to watering-places, and carry the metropolis with them. I like more elbow-room, and fewer incumbances. I like solitude, when I give myself up to it, for the sake of solitude ; nor do I ask for

. . . a friend in my retreat,  
Whom I may whisper solitude is sweet.

The soul of a journey is liberty, perfect liberty, to think, feel, do, just as one pleases. We go a journey chiefly to be free of all impediments and of all inconveniences ; to leave ourselves behind, much more to get rid of others. It is because I want a little breathing-space to muse on indifferent matters, when contemplation

May plume her feathers and let grow her wings,  
That in the various bustle of resort  
Were all too ruffled, and sometimes impaired,

that I absent myself from the town for a while, without feeling at a loss the moment I am left by myself. Instead of a friend in a post-chaise or in a tilbury, to exchange good things with, and vary the same stale topics over again, for once let me have a truce with impertinence. Give me the clear blue sky over my head, and the green turf beneath my feet, a winding road before me, and a three-hours' march to dinner—and then to thinking ! It is hard if I cannot start some game on these lone heaths. I laugh, I run, I leap, I sing for joy. From the point of yonder rolling cloud, I plunge into my past being, and revel there, as the sunburnt Indian plunges headlong into the



wave that wafts him to his native shore. Then long-forgotten things, like 'sunken wrack and sumless treasures' burst upon my eager sight, and I begin to feel, think, and be myself again. Instead of an awkward silence, broken by attempts at wit or dull common-places, mine is that undisturbed silence of the heart which alone is perfect eloquence. No one likes puns, alliterations, antitheses, argument and analysis better than I do; but I sometimes had rather be without them. 'Leave, O leave me to my repose!' I have just now other business in hand, which would seem idle to you, but is with me 'very stuff of the conscience'. Is not this wild rose sweet without a comment? Does not this daisy leap to my heart set in its coat of emerald? Yet if I were to explain to you the circumstance that has so endeared it to me, you would only smile. Had I not better then keep it to myself, and let it serve me to brood over, from here to yonder craggy point, and from thence onward to the far-distant horizon? I should be but bad company all that way, and therefore prefer being alone. I have heard it said that you may, when the moody fit comes on, walk or ride on by yourself, and indulge your reveries. But this looks like a breach of manners, a neglect of others, and you are thinking all the time that you ought to rejoin your party. 'Out upon such half-faced fellowship,' say I. I like to be either entirely to myself, or entirely at the disposal of others; to talk or be silent, to walk or sit still, to be sociable or solitary. I was pleased with an observation of

Mr. Cobbett's, that he 'thought it a bad French custom to drink our wine with our meals, and that an Englishman ought to do only one thing at a time'. So I cannot talk and think, or indulge in melancholy musing and lively conversation by fits and starts. 'Let me have a companion of my way,' says Sterne, 'were it but to remark how the shadows lengthen as the sun declines.' It is beautifully said : but, in my opinion, this continual comparing of notes interferes with the involuntary impression of things upon the mind, and hurts the sentiment. If you only hint what you feel in a kind of dumb show, it is insipid : if you have to explain it, it is making a toil of a pleasure. You cannot read the book of nature, without being perpetually put to the trouble of translating it for the benefit of others. I am for the synthetical method on a journey, in preference to the analytical. I am content to lay in a stock of ideas then, and to examine and anatomize them afterwards. I want to see my vague notions float like the down of the thistle before the breeze, and not to have them entangled in the briars and thorns of controversy. . . .

## §2

[KEY-QUESTION: *What is the one subject, according to Hazlitt, on which it is pleasant to talk on a journey?*]

In general, a good thing spoils out-of-door prospects : it should be reserved for table-talk. Lamb is for this reason, I take it, the worst company in the world out-of-doors ; because he is the best within. I grant, there is one subject on

which it is pleasant to talk on a journey ; and that is, what one shall have for supper when we get to our inn at night. The open air improves this sort of conversation or friendly altercation, by setting a keener edge on appetite. Every mile of the road heightens the flavour of the viands we expect at the end of it. How fine it is to enter some old town, walled and turretted, just at the approach of nightfall, or to come to some straggling village, with the lights streaming through the surrounding gloom ; and then after enquiring for the best entertainment that the place affords, to 'take one's ease at one's inn !' These eventful moments in our lives' history are too precious, too full of solid heart-felt happiness to be frittered and dribbled away in imperfect sympathy. I would have them all to myself, and drain them to the last drop : they will do to talk of or to write about afterwards. What a delicate speculation it is, after drinking whole goblets of tea,

The cups that cheer but not inebriate,  
and letting the fumes ascend into the brain, to sit considering what we shall have for supper.

WILLIAM HAZLITT  
(From *Table Talk*)

## NOTES

### INTRODUCTION

This essay is in sharp contrast to the other two pieces on the Open-air Life. In both of those the authors' main aim was to describe particular places which delighted them and to impress the charm upon the reader.

In this, the author is almost entirely occupied with the expression and explanation of his feelings and ideas on travel in general: his writing is much more subjective than objective, more contemplative than descriptive. As you will find on reading this piece, each method has its own charm.

## A. COMPREHENSION

### §1. The advantage of travelling alone

#### KEY-QUESTION

'Why does Hazlitt prefer a solitary walk?'

#### EXPLANATIONS

**never less alone than when alone:** when alone, I do not feel lonely, because I have the company of nature.

**to vegetate like the country:** to grow in silence, as a vegetable grows.

**not for criticizing hedge-rows:** I don't want to spend the time discussing whether the scenery is good or bad.

**watering-places:** health-resorts, places where the water is particularly good or medicinal, to which many people go.

**carry the metropolis with them:** metropolis = the chief city, the capital. There are people who are so dependent on society that even when they go for a holiday in the country they want to have the same amusements as in the towns. Such people like to spend their holidays in fashionable health-resorts, such as Simla or Mussoorie.

**elbow-room:** room to move freely.

**encumbrances:** burdens, impediments.

**breathing-space to muse on indifferent matters:** leisure to think about unimportant matters.

**may plume . . . impaired:** (metaphor and personification); contemplation is referred to as if it

were a bird whose wings have been crushed and damaged, and which needs time to grow them again so that it may be able to fly again (cf. *flights* of imagination).

**at a loss**: puzzled, bewildered.

**post-chaise or tilbury**: different kinds of carriages used for travelling by road; Hazlitt lived before the time of railway-travelling, or motor-cars.

**good things**: jokes

**let me have a truce with impertinence**: let me make peace with (and free myself from the attacks of) people who want to force conversation on me.

**Give me . . . to thinking**: a beautiful passage: read it aloud several times, and feel the rhythm of it.

**From the point . . . my past being**: I let my eye wander over the landscape and when it reaches the horizon, my imagination enters the clouds and I begin to revive memories of happy events of my past.

**sunken wrack and sunless treasures**: events which have been forgotten just as wrecks and incalculable treasures lie buried at the bottom of the ocean.

**an awkward silence, broken by attempts, etc.**: in company, when people find nothing to talk about, there is sometimes an awkward silence: then they feel that they must say something, so they talk about commonplaces such as the weather, or try to remember old jokes.

**silence . . . is perfect eloquence**: by this contradiction in terms (for eloquence cannot be silent), Hazlitt means that the deepest feelings are often best left unexpressed.

**puns**: play on words; the use of the same word with different meanings, usually with humorous effect.

**alliteration**: the use of a number of words beginning with the same letter, e.g. 'Apt alliteration's artful aid.'

**antitheses:** contrast of ideas marked by parallelism of contrasted words.

**analysis:** breaking up into component parts, attempt to find out the nature, meaning or origin of a thing.

**very stuff of the conscience:** of the utmost inner value.

**emerald:** bright green colour.

**moody:** subject to changes of mood or feeling.

**indulge your reveries:** enjoy your fancies or day-dreams as much as you like.

**out upon such half-faced fellowship:** get rid of such incomplete sociability.

**by fits and starts:** suddenly changing from one thing to another.

**insipid:** tasteless, uninteresting.

**You cannot read . . . others:** when you are reading an interesting book, it spoils your pleasure if you have to stop at the end of each paragraph in order to translate it to someone else; similarly your enjoyment of nature is spoiled by having to keep up a conversation about it.

**synthetical . . . analytical:** he explains this in the following sentence.

**like the down of the thistle:** an apt and charming simile; thistle-down is the feathery seed of the thistle which is blown about by the slightest breeze; controversy is aptly compared to thorns on which ideas (thistle-down) might get entangled.

## §2. The pleasure of reaching a stopping-place

### KEY-QUESTION

'What is the one subject, according to Hazlitt, on which it is pleasant to talk on a journey?'

### EXPLANATIONS

**a good thing:** a witty remark or a good topic of conversation.

**Table-talk:** casual conversation on light topics which people enjoy at meal-times (at table). Hazlitt named his book 'Table-talk'.

**Lamb . . . the best within:** Lamb was a friend and contemporary of Hazlitt. His famous 'Essays' are perhaps the finest example of 'table-talk': they are chatty and delightful in style. Hazlitt is of opinion, however, that such talk is not suitable when one is out-of-doors, but excellent 'within' (i.e. indoors).

**setting a keener edge:** metaphor from sharpening a knife.

**Every mile . . . end of it:** the further we go, the more hungry we become, and the more we look forward to and enjoy our food.

**walled and turretted:** fortified with walls and towers, as many of the old towns are.

**enquiring for the best entertainment:** cf. Goldsmith's asking for 'the best house'; see section 6 of the passage on Goldsmith in Group V.

**frittered and dribbled away:** wasted. Unless you are in good company, you do not enjoy such moments fully.

**drain them to the last drop:** metaphor; comparing the 'eventful moments' to a costly and refreshing drink.

**the cups that cheer but not inebriate:** i.e. tea, which is a stimulant but does not produce intoxication.

## B. APPRECIATION

The beginning of the 19th century is notable in English literature for the brilliant essayists who were writing then. It was a time when people, throughout western Europe, were beginning to wake up to the existence of the numberless interesting things in the world around them, the wonders of Nature, the possibilities of science and mechanical invention, and the social and political changes. These interests naturally expressed themselves in the increasing

number of newspapers and magazines, and many of the famous essays of this time first appeared as articles in magazines, among them being those of Lamb and Hazlitt. The personal characteristics of their writers are clearly seen in the works of these two men. There is a greater forcefulness about Hazlitt's writings, while Lamb's are marked by tenderness and charm.

### C. ASSIGNMENTS

1. State your own view on the question raised by the remark: 'Let me have a companion of my way, were it but to remark how the shadows lengthen as the sun declines.' If you disagree with Hazlitt's view, try to make out a case for the opposite side, point by point.
2. Mention and explain three fine metaphors or similes from this piece.
3. Read any of Lamb's essays, and compare and contrast his style with Hazlitt's.

### NOTES ON AUTHORS OF GROUP III.

THE REV. CHARLES FREER ANDREWS (1871- ) is a co-worker with Dr. Rabindranath Tagore at Shantiniketan school and in the Visvabharati University. Throughout his life he has been engaged in educational and humanitarian activities. For some time he was a Fellow and lecturer of Pembroke College, Oxford, and, later, a member of the Syndicate of the Punjab University. He has taken a very active part in trying to improve the lot of Indians overseas, particularly in East and South Africa. Most of his books have been written in connexion with the propaganda he has done on behalf of social reform, India, and Dr. Tagore's work.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON (1850-1894) was trained first for engineering and then for law, but his



chief ambition was to become a writer, and in spite of weak health he rose to fame as a contributor of brilliant essays to *The Cornhill Magazine*, and later as a writer of travels, stories and novels. He took immense pains over all that he wrote. He began to train himself in style by imitating his favourite authors, Lamb and Hazlitt, but soon succeeded in giving his own characteristic touch to his work.

**WILLIAM HAZLITT** (1778-1830) was one of the finest of English literary critics. He tried first to be an artist, and it was only when he had passed the age of thirty that he found his real profession. He contributed many brilliant essays to newspapers and periodicals of the time. He was a man of very strong views, and the vigour of his mind is expressed in the forcefulness of his style. :-

## GROUP IV—CITIZENSHIP

### WHAT IS CIVILIZATION?

#### A DIALOGUE

##### §1

[KEY-QUESTION: *When do things help us to be civilized and when do they not?*]

*Myself.*—I am trying to write a book on Civilization, and I want to find out what being civilized is. What do you think?

*Lucy.*—Oh, I suppose, wearing proper clothes, riding about in buses and cars, having money to buy things and shops to buy them in.

*Myself.*—Yes, but babies wear proper clothes, and Mrs. X rides in buses and buys things in shops. Would you say that babies and Mrs. X were civilized?

*Lucy.*—Oh, no! I don't think they are a bit. But, you see, they could be if they liked. There are so many civilized things about now, that anybody can be civilized if he tries.

*Myself.*—What sort of things do you mean?

*Lucy.*—Machines, and trains, and wireless, and telephones, and cinemas.

*Myself.*—Well, I dare say they have something to do now with civilization; but I don't think that just having them and using them makes you civilized. After all, being civilized ought to be some credit to you, something you can

be proud of, and there is nothing to be proud of about getting into a train. Let us try and think of some civilized people, and see if that helps us. Tell me anybody you can think of.

*Lucy.*—Shakespeare.

*Myself.*—Why?

*Lucy.*—Because he was a great man and wrote plays that people are proud of.

*Myself.*—Now I think we may be getting warmer. But tell me, do you like Shakespeare's plays?

*Lucy.*—Not much.

*Myself.*—Then why do you say they are great?

*Lucy.*—Because, I suppose, I shall like them some day. Anyway, grown-up people make a great fuss about them.

*Myself.*—Yes, and there are other things such as pictures and music, that you don't like much yet, but grown-ups make a fuss about. If Shakespeare's plays are a sign of civilization, so are Raphael's pictures and Beethoven's music.

*Lucy.*—I suppose so, although I don't know much about them.

*Myself.*—Then to produce beautiful things such as plays, pictures and music is being civilized; people like Shakespeare and Raphael and Beethoven are the sort of people who count.

*Lucy.*—But all sorts of people I have read about, like the caliphs and princes in the *Arabian Nights* had splendid things, palaces and silks and satins, and jewels, scents and gorgeous clothes, and wonderful carpets, and lovely

things to eat and drink, and slaves to wait on them. Weren't they civilized?

*Myself.*—I am not sure. You see, they just had what they liked and did what they wanted to.

*Lucy.*—Well, why shouldn't they?

*Myself.*—Think of something nice, anything you like. . . .

*Lucy.*—Treacle-toffees.

*Myself.*—Well, suppose you were very rich, had as much money as you could possibly want, and bought thousands and thousands of treacle-toffees. Wouldn't you get sick of them?

*Lucy.*—I suppose so.

*Myself.*—And similarly with catapults.

*Lucy.*—What do you mean?

*Myself.*—Well, John likes catapults more than anything else. But suppose he was very rich indeed, and, because he liked catapults best, spent his money on buying catapults, so that he had hundreds of them. He wouldn't be much better off than he was with one or two, would he?

*Lucy.*—You mean he could not let off more than one or two at once.

*Myself.*—Yes. And he would very soon get tired of catapults altogether.

*Lucy.*—I expect he would; but what has that got to do with it?

*Myself.*—Why, this: that the things you read about in the *Arabian Nights*, the splendid palaces and gorgeous clothes and hundreds

of slaves, and all that sort of thing, seem to me to be just grown-up substitutes for treacle-toffees and catapults. People get born the sons of kings, and they grow up to inherit power and riches, and then they say to themselves, 'Now, what do I like best?' And having found out what it was, they have spent their money in getting as much or as many of what they like best as they could.

*Lucy.*—And then they got tired of it?

*Myself.*—Yes. Because when you have had a certain amount of doing just what you want and enjoying the sort of things you like, you don't want any more.

*Lucy.*—Like getting tired of the treacle-toffees. But you can always stop and begin again.

*Myself.*—That is what the Romans did. They used to eat enormous meals, and when they couldn't eat any more, they took something to make them sick. Then, when they were empty, they began to eat again. But I don't call that being civilized. Do you?

*Lucy.*—No, I don't.

*Myself.*—After all, pigs do that, although they haven't the sense to be sick afterwards.

*Lucy.*—And pigs are not at all civilized.

*Myself.*—Well then, let us say that using money and power just to get what you want and do what you like, although it may be very nice for a time, isn't being civilized. In other words, civilization is not just being splendid and grand and living in luxury. And since most of the princes and rulers of the world

who have been rich and powerful have used their money and power in this way, they weren't civilized.

*Lucy.*—And isn't it being civilized to own gorgeous things like the caliphs in the *Arabian Nights*?

*Myself.*—No! They must also be beautiful things like the plays and pictures we were talking about.

*Lucy.*—How do you know which are the beautiful things?

*Myself.*—By seeing which are the ones you don't get tired of. Beautiful things live. That is to say, people go on liking them in all ages. But things which are the grown-up substitutes for treacle-toffees last only a short time, because people get tired of them.

## §2

[KEY-QUESTION: *What conditions are necessary for progress in invention and discovery?*]

But let us go back a bit. Those shops and machines and cars we were talking about, they are not at all beautiful, yet we thought they might have something to do with being civilized.

*Lucy.*—Yes, and I know what it is. They have all been invented and making inventions is the sort of thing people do when they are civilized. It is because James Watt watched

the kettle, and Newton saw the apple drop, and things like that, that there are inventions now.

*Myself.*—Yes, but it was the *inventing* and not the *inventions* that mattered.

*Lucy.*—I don't understand.

*Myself.*—Well, lots of people had seen kettles boil and apples fall down before Watt and Newton, yet they did not invent anything. Why not?

*Lucy.*—They didn't notice anything special about them, I suppose.

*Myself.*—Quite. But Newton and Watt did ; that was the point. Falling apples and boiling kettles caused them to think new thoughts, and because they thought new thoughts men came to understand more about the world and to invent things. Now, although I am not sure about the things we actually invent, I do think that this business of thinking new thoughts, whether they lead to inventions or not, is a sign of being civilized.

*Lucy.*—Why?

*Myself.*—Because, so long as people go on just thinking the same as one another, nothing ever changes.

*Lucy.*—You mean that if everybody had always thought the same as their parents we should still be savages?

*Myself.*—That's it ! It's because people think new things that civilization happens. And to think what is new they must also think freely.

*Lucy.*—Why shouldn't they?

*Myself.*—Well, they haven't, you know. Most people who have thought for themselves have been told that it was wicked to think differently from other people. Usually there have been priests who have told them that if they thought this or that, the gods would punish them. And people believed the priests and were afraid of the gods, and thought what they were told to think. And even if there hadn't been priests, people always get disliked who think or act differently from their neighbours. Look how beastly you are to new girls at school who are a bit different from the others. And grown-ups are just the same. Now, to think freely is very often to think differently, and these things make it very difficult for people to think freely. Yet, as we have seen, without free thinking there can be no civilization.

*Lucy.*—But I still don't see why more people don't think freely, if it is as important as you say.

*Myself.*—There are lots of things which are necessary before a person gets the chance. For instance, he must have security ; nobody can think about things, if he is afraid of being robbed or murdered at any moment. Also he must have leisure to think in, and he won't have that if he has to give all his attention to getting food to eat and clothes to wear, if, that is to say, he spends all his time earning his living. And he must have other people to talk to. So that you may say that



security, leisure and society, which are all necessary to free thinking are necessary also to civilization.

## §3

[KEY-QUESTION: *Why is the existence of law and order necessary to civilization?*]

*Lucy.*—Is that all about civilization?

*Myself.*—I think there may be one other thing.

*Lucy.*—What is that?

*Myself.*—All this business about being good.

*Lucy.*—But what has being good to do with it? Nobody wants to be good really; they are only good because they get into rows if they are not.

*Myself.*—Probably. And again it is just the same with grown-ups. If I want to kidnap somebody else's children, or cut his throat, or steal his car, or play with his tennis-racket, I don't do it partly because I should get into such a row if I were found out.

*Lucy.*—But what has that got to do with civilization?

*Myself.*—Just this. That if we all took what we wanted to and ran off with one another's children, and stole one another's rackets, things just couldn't go on. We should all be quarrelling and fighting, for one thing. And, for another, nobody would be able to invent anything or make beautiful things: life would be too dangerous. So there would be no civilization anyway.

*Lucy.*—Is that why grown-up people keep the rules and are good?

*Myself.*—Perhaps it is not the only reason. I am not sure. But it is certainly one of the main ones. So, you see, this business of being good has something to do with civilization, and being good means acting justly towards your neighbour, and respecting his property and obeying the laws and perhaps other things as well.

*Lucy.*—What things? I should like to know what being good is.

*Myself.*—So should I; so would lots of people. Anyway, we have discovered some of the things that count as being civilized, making beautiful things, thinking freely, and thinking new things, and keeping the rules without which people couldn't get on together. Grown-ups call the first of these things *art*, the second *science and philosophy*, and the third *political justice and ethics*. Now these things may not be all that civilization is, but anyway they will do to go on with.

C. E. M. JOAD

(From *The Story of Civilization*)

## NOTES

### INTRODUCTION

In a world in which the personal possession of good things seems to be essential not only to happiness but even to security, it is not surprising that even grown-up people sometimes regard civilization as a matter of

*having*, rather than of *being* and *doing*. In this delightful dialogue between himself and a little girl, Mr. Joad, a famous modern writer on very difficult questions of economics and philosophy, helps us to understand exactly what it means to be 'civilized'.

#### A. COMPREHENSION

§1. **The things that count, and the things that do not**

##### KEY-QUESTION

'When do things help to make us civilized, and when do they not?'

##### EXPLANATIONS

**Lucy** : an English girl's name.

**Mrs. X.** : the woman-servant who looks after the house in which Lucy lives. Lucy does not like her at all, and thinks that she is very uncivilized because she is often untidily dressed, and sometimes rude and cross. She is called 'X' to conceal her real name.

**We may be getting warmer** : we are coming nearer to the discovery of the truth. (This is a colloquial expression : it is often used by children in the game of 'hide-and-seek' ; when the seeker is approaching the place or person he has to discover, he is said to be 'getting warmer'.)

**make a great fuss about them** : this is the child's colloquial way of saying that grown-up people think them very important.

**Raphael** : the great Italian painter.

**Beethoven** : the great German composer of music. (The name is pronounced *bate-hove-n*.)

**Arabian Nights** : the famous adventure-stories with which the Caliph of Baghdad was entertained for a-thousand-and-one nights. The Caliph lived in great luxury and magnificence.

**Treacle-toffees** : a kind of sweetmeat which Lucy likes very much.

**catapults**: a shooting instrument made by fixing elastic to a forked stick; little boys are usually very fond of shooting with them, using stones as ammunition. John, Lucy's little brother, likes catapults very much.

**what the Romans did**: they used to do this at their feasts in the days of the decline of the Roman Empire when they were becoming decadent and lazy because of too much luxury.

**Beautiful things live**: i.e. they last; people go on liking them. This is the important point; the mere *possession* of things, whether beautiful or not, does not make a man civilized, but the ability to *appreciate* or to *create* beautiful things (even if one does not own them) is one of the chief factors in being civilized.

## §2. Thinking new thoughts

### KEY-QUESTION

'What conditions are necessary for progress in invention and discovery of new things and ideas?'

### EXPLANATIONS

**James Watt**: inventor of the steam-engine.

**Newton**: discoverer of the laws of Gravitation.

**I am not sure about the things we actually invent**: it is not the inventions, however clever, that civilize us, but the fact of men *having invented* them and of others *appreciating* and *using* them. (To dress a monkey in beautiful clothes does not civilize it, because it is incapable of *appreciating* or *utilizing* them properly. Similarly with some people !)

**if everybody had always thought the same as their parents we should still be savages**: a striking fact which schoolmasters as well as parents often forget.

**how beastly you are to new girls at school**: the word 'beastly' is used as English schoolboys

and schoolgirls use it, in a 'slang' sense, i.e. colloquially: used in that way it means 'horrid', 'unpleasant'. (It should not be used in this sense unless it is used colloquially.) New pupils are often teased at first for some oddity of behaviour or speech.

**There are lots of things necessary:** (to free thinking): This is an important paragraph. Compare the ideas with those expressed by Mr. H. G. Wells in Section 3 of the passage from his works in Group VIII.

### §3. About being good

#### KEY-QUESTION

'Why is the existence of law and order essential to civilization?' (Compare with 'The Rule of the Road', the next piece in this group).

#### EXPLANATIONS

**All this business about:** this is a colloquial expression.

**they get into rows:** also colloquial; a 'row' literally means a 'noise'; here it means something which causes trouble, so 'to get into a row' means 'to get into trouble', or to be liable to be punished.

### B. APPRECIATION

This piece has been included not only because it is interesting, but because it gives you a good idea of ordinary conversational English. As it is a dialogue with a child, it is perhaps simpler than the average, but not much. In dramas, of course, you get dialogue, and if ever you want to try to write a dialogue or a play, you should note this important point,—the conversation should not be too *one-sided*, that is, it should not consist simply of remarks by one character, and 'Yes' or 'No' or very brief replies from the others, unless you are depicting someone delivering a sermon. Even in this piece.

the author, speaking as 'Myself', has too large a share of the dialogue, but that could hardly be helped as he was explaining the matter to a child. You will find the same defect in the Socratic dialogue in Group VII.

### C. ASSIGNMENTS

1. Arrange the following in order according to the degree in which you consider them to be 'civilized', and give reasons for your arrangement:— Shakespeare: Buddha: Julius Caesar: Sir J. C. Bose: yourself.

2. What is meant by 'slang'?

3. Do you agree with what Lucy says about being good, viz: 'Nobody wants to be good really: they are only good because they get into rows if they are not'? If you can think of any other reasons, write a few lines about them.

4. What are the chief things 'that count as being civilized', and what conditions are necessary for their attainment? Write your answer in tabular form.

## THE RULE OF THE ROAD

### § I

#### [KEY-QUESTION :<sup>1</sup>]

A stout old lady was walking with her basket down the middle of a street in Petrograd to the great confusion of the traffic and with no small peril to herself. It was pointed out to her that the pavement was the place for foot-passengers, but she replied: 'I'm going to walk where I like. We've got liberty now.' It did not occur to the

<sup>1</sup> To be supplied by the student, as an exercise.

dear old lady that if liberty entitled the foot-passenger to walk down the middle of the road it also entitled the cab-driver to drive on the pavement, and that the end of such liberty would be universal chaos. Everybody would be getting in everybody else's way and nobody would get anywhere. Individual liberty would have become social anarchy.

There is a danger of the world getting liberty-drunk in these days like the old lady with the basket, and it is just as well to remind ourselves of what the rule of the road means. It means that in order that the liberties of all may be preserved the liberties of everybody must be curtailed. When the policeman, say, at Piccadilly Circus steps into the middle of the road and puts out his hand, he is a symbol not of tyranny, but of liberty. You may not think so. You may, being in a hurry and seeing your motor-car pulled up by this insolence of office, feel that your liberty has been outraged. How dare this fellow interfere with your free use of the public highway? Then, if you are a reasonable person, you will reflect that if he did not, incidentally, interfere with you he would interfere with no one, and the result would be that Piccadilly Circus would be a maelstrom that you would never cross at all. You have submitted to a curtailment of private liberty in order that you may enjoy a social order which makes your liberty a reality.

Liberty is not a personal affair only, but a social contract. It is an accommodation of interest. In matters which do not touch anybody

else's liberty, of course, I may be as free as I like. If I choose to go down the Strand in a dressing-gown, with long hair and bare feet, who shall say me nay? You have liberty to laugh at me, but I have liberty to be indifferent to you. And if I have a fancy for dyeing my hair, or waxing my moustache (which heaven forbid), or wearing a tall hat, a frock-coat and sandals, or going to bed late or getting up early, I shall follow my fancy and ask no man's permission. I shall not enquire of you whether I may eat mustard with my mutton. I may like mustard with my mutton. And you will not ask me whether you may be a Protestant or a Catholic, whether you may marry the dark lady or the fair lady, whether you may prefer Ella Wheeler Wilcox to Wordsworth, or champagne to shandy-gaff.

In all these and a thousand other details you and I please ourselves and ask no one's leave. We have a whole kingdom in which we rule alone, can do what we choose, be wise or ridiculous, harsh or easy, conventional or odd. But directly we step out of that kingdom our personal liberty of action becomes qualified by other people's liberty. I might like to practise on the trombone from midnight till three in the morning. If I went on to the top of Helvellyn to do it I could please myself, but if I do it out in the streets the neighbours will remind me that my liberty to blow the trombone must not interfere with their liberty to sleep in quiet. There are a lot of people in the world, and I have to accommodate my liberty to their liberties.



We are all liable to forget this and, unfortunately we are much more conscious of the imperfections of others in this respect than of our own.

## §2

[KEY-QUESTION: *What is meant by 'the social sense' and how is it here exemplified by our author ?*]

I got into a railway carriage at a country station the other morning and settled down for what the schoolboys would call an hour's 'swot' at a Blue book. I was not reading it for pleasure. The truth is that I never do read Blue-books for pleasure. I read them as a barrister reads a brief for the very humble purpose of turning an honest penny out of them. Now, if you are reading a book for pleasure it doesn't matter what is going on around you. I think I could enjoy *Tristram Shandy* or *Treasure Island* in the midst of an earthquake.

But when you are reading a thing as a task you need reasonable quiet, and that is what I didn't get, for at the next station in came a couple of men, one of whom talked to his friend for the rest of the journey in a loud and pompous voice. He was one of those people who remind one of that story of Horn Tooke, who, meeting a person of immense swagger in the street, stopped him and said, 'Excuse me, sir, but are you someone in particular?' This gentleman was someone in particular. As I wrestled with clauses and sections, his voice rose like a gale, and his family

history, the deeds of his sons in the war, and his criticisms of the generals and the politicians submerged my poor attempts to hang on to my job. I shut up the Blue-book, looked out of the window, and listened wearily while the 'voice thundered on with themes like these: 'Now what French ought to have done. . . . ' 'The mistake the Germans made. . . ' 'If only Asquith had. . . ' 'You know the sort of stuff. I had heard it all before, oh, so often. It was like a barrel-organ groaning out some banal song of long ago.

If I had asked him to be good enough to talk in a lower tone I daresay he would have thought I was a very rude fellow. It did not occur to him that anybody could have anything better to do than to listen to him, and I have no doubt he left the carriage convinced that everybody in it had, thanks to him, had a very illuminating journey, and would carry away a pleasing impression of his encyclopædic range. He was obviously a well-intentioned person. The thing that was wrong with him was that he had not the social sense. He was not 'a clubbable man'.

A reasonable consideration for the rights or feelings of others is the foundation of social conduct. It is commonly alleged against women that in this respect they are less civilized than men, and I am bound to confess that in my experience it is the woman—the well-dressed woman—who thrusts herself in front of you at the ticket-office. 'The man would not attempt it, partly because he knows the thing would not be tolerated from him, but also because he has been better drilled in the

small give-and-take of social relationships. He has lived more in the broad current of the world, where you have to learn to accommodate yourself to the general standard of conduct, and his school-life, his club life, and his games have in this respect given him a training that women are only now beginning to enjoy. . . .

### §3

[KEY-QUESTION: *What marks a person as civilized or uncivilized?*]

I suppose the fact is that we can be neither complete anarchists nor complete socialists in this complex world—or rather we must be a judicious mixture of both. We have both liberties to preserve—our individual liberty and our social liberty. We must watch the bureaucrat on the one side and warn off the anarchist on the other. I am neither a Marxist, nor a Tolstoyan, but a compromise. I shall not permit any authority to say that my child must go to this school or that, shall specialize in science or arts, shall play rugger or soccer. These things are personal. But if I proceed to say that my child shall have no education at all, that he shall be brought up as a primeval savage, or at Mr. Fagin's academy for pickpockets, then society will politely but firmly tell me that it has no use for primeval savages and a very stern objection to pickpockets, and that my child must have a certain minimum of education whether I like it or not. I cannot have the liberty

to be a nuisance to my neighbours or make my child a burden and a danger to the commonwealth.

It is in small matters of conduct, in the observance of the rule of the road, that we pass judgement upon ourselves, and declare that we are civilized or uncivilized. The great moments of heroism and sacrifice are rare. It is the little habits of commonplace intercourse that make up the great sum of life and sweeten or make bitter the journey. I hope my friend in the railway carriage will reflect on this. Then he will not cease, I am sure, to explain to his neighbour where French went wrong and where the Germans went ditto ; but he will do it in a way that will permit me to read my Blue-book undisturbed.

A. G. GARDINER

(From *Leaves in the Wind*)

## NOTES

### INTRODUCTION

'Keep to the left' is the rule of the road. In this essay the writer explains to us that this rule exists in order that everyone may enjoy a fair share of freedom. If there were no such rules we should not be freer but less free, because everybody would get in everybody else's way, and no one would get anywhere. The writer then proceeds to argue that we ought to apply the rule of the road voluntarily to our own lives, that is, we should gladly accept some limitation of our freedom for the convenience of all. This is the kind of 'give and take' spirit which makes a man 'clubbable'.

## COMPREHENSION

**§1. Too much individual liberty may lead to social anarchy**

KEY-QUESTION<sup>1</sup>

## EXPLANATIONS

**Petrograd:** formerly the capital of Russia, under the name of St. Petersburg. It is now called Leningrad. Russia was an absolute monarchy under the Tzars, and the people had hardly any freedom. It became a Republic after the Revolution of 1917 and in their first enjoyment of liberty the people were naturally inclined to go to absurd extremes.

**pavement:** the paved pathway for foot-passengers on both sides of the roads in big cities.

**social anarchy:** confusion of society due to lawlessness.

**liberty-drunk:** metaphor; as a man loses control of himself when he drinks too much alcoholic liquor, so people are apt to go to excess when they get political freedom.

**curtailed:** reduced, limited.

**Piccadilly Circus:** a busy centre in London where a number of roads meet and the traffic is very dense.

**symbol not of tyranny but of liberty:** the policeman seems to be interfering with your liberty, but he does so in order to prevent a confusion which would interfere with you much more than he does.

**maelstrom:** whirlpool. (The name of a whirlpool off the coast of Norway. Here used as a metaphor.) If the traffic were not controlled by the policeman, there would be a rush and confusion like that of a whirlpool, and your car would not be able to get across at all.

**insolence of office:** rude behaviour of an official.

**social contract:** an agreement to abide by the rules of society. Of course nobody signs such an

<sup>1</sup> To be supplied by the student, as an exercise.

agreement, but it is understood; and if you do not abide by the rules, you are considered unfit for society.

**accommodation of interest:** making room for the requirements of each person.

**the Strand:** a busy street in London, where the Law Courts are. The author is a London journalist, so he takes many examples from that city.

**dressing-gown . . . . . indifferent to you:** dressing-gown is a sort of long coat worn when one is not fully dressed; there is no law against wearing such a garment out-of-doors, but anybody who did so, in Europe, would be laughed at because it would be unusual, just as it would be for a man to walk in London with bare feet. But if you don't mind being laughed at, there is no reason why you should not do as you please in such matters, and in those which the author mentions in the following sentences, for all such things are *personal* affairs and nobody else's liberty is interfered with by your following your own choice therein.

**Ella Wheeler Wilcox:** a popular American poetess.

**champagne:** an expensive French wine.

**shandy-gaff:** a mixture of beer and ginger-beer.

**conventional:** conforming to the usual practice, doing as most people do.

**trombone:** a trumpet-like instrument which makes a very loud sound.

**Helvellyn:** the highest mountain in England.

## §2. Examples of the social sense

### KEY-QUESTION

'What is meant by "the social sense", and how is it exemplified here by our author?'

### EXPLANATIONS

**swot:** a slang word used by schoolboys, meaning 'working hard at studies'. It is printed in

inverted commas because it is a slang word, not generally used in writing.

**Blue-book:** books published by the Government to give information on important public matters. They are called 'Blue-books' because they often have blue covers.

**as a barrister . . . . . penny out of them:** lawyers do not usually study their 'briefs' (cases) for pleasure, but to earn a living. So also a journalist has to study Government publications in order to write articles for the newspapers. 'Turning an honest penny' means earning a livelihood honestly.

**Tristram Shandy or Treasure Island in the midst of an earthquake:** these two books (novels) are so interesting that even an earthquake would not stop his enjoyment of them. Of course it is a humorous exaggeration.

**pompous:** showing that one thinks oneself important.

**Horn Tooke:** an English politician and writer of the 18th century.

**swagger:** pompous behaviour, showing that one thinks oneself better than others.

**'Are you some one in particular?':** How would you answer this question? If you say 'yes', it proves you to be a pompous person: if you say 'no', it means that you are 'no one in particular' i.e. of no importance.

**wrestled with clauses and sections:** metaphor; the Blue-book was very dull, and had to be studied with effort (like wrestling), sentence by sentence.

**like a gale:** getting louder and louder like a stormy wind increasing.

**French:** the Commander-in-chief of the British army in the early part of the Great War.

**Asquith:** Prime Minister of England at the same time.

**barrel-organ:** a mechanical musical instrument;

it plays very inferior music and therefore he says it 'groans'.

**banal**: commonplace, ordinary.

**encyclopoedic range**: knowledge as extensive as that which is contained in an encyclopædia.

**clubbable**: one who is able to be a good member of a club, i.e. one who is considerate of the convenience of fellow-members.

**civilized**: literally means 'fit to live in a city', i.e. to be a useful member of society.

**thrusts herself . . . . . at the ticket-office**: when a large number of people want to buy tickets at the same time, e.g. at the railway-station, the 'civilized' way is for all to stand in a long line or 'queue', so that each may go to the office in turn, and come out easily. People have learned to do this in countries like England, because it is found that if all rush in at once from all sides, there is much more delay and inconvenience. This is a good example of the 'social sense' or 'give-and-take' of social relationship, which is the mark of a 'civilized' person. The author says that men have developed it more than women because they have more opportunities of mixing with large numbers of other people.

### §3. The necessary compromise between personal liberty and social submission

#### KEY-QUESTION

'What marks out a person as civilized or uncivilized?'

#### EXPLANATIONS

**anarchist, socialist, Marxist**: these terms are here used in the loose popular sense rather than with their strict political meaning; here they are used with the following significance:—**anarchist**: one who wishes society to be rid of restrictions of any kind.



**socialist:** one who wishes everything to be regulated by the State.

**Marxist:** a follower of Karl Marx (1818-1883), the German author of a book called *Capital* in which the theories of Communist Socialism are propounded. Those theories are being worked out in practice in Russia nowadays.

**Tolstoyan:** an anarchist, a follower of Count Leo Tolstoy, the famous Russian social reformer and philosopher (1828-1910) by whose views on non-violence Mahatma Gandhi was much influenced.

**We must watch . . . . the anarchist on the other:** we must follow the middle path, not allowing officials to interfere excessively with private affairs on the one hand (bureaucracy), nor allowing excess of individual freedom on the other (anarchy).

**rugger or soccer:** Rugby football or Association football (the two chief varieties of the game of football.)

**Mr. Fagin's academy:** i.e. taught to be a thief. Mr. Fagin had a school for teaching the art of stealing. See *Oliver Twist* by Charles Dickens.

**must have a certain minimum of education:** in many countries education is now compulsory up to a certain standard; formerly even this was considered to be a shocking interference with personal liberty, but ideas are gradually changing, and State control is being more and more accepted.

**The great moments . . . . . the journey:** we rarely get chances to do great acts of heroism and sacrifice, but we affect our own lives and the lives of our fellows very greatly for good or ill by the small actions in which the use of 'the social sense' makes all the difference.

## B. APPRECIATION

Notice how this skilful writer holds our attention from the very start by beginning his article with an anecdote. Mr. Gardiner's style is typical of the

best modern journalism; it is forceful, clear and direct, and makes the reader feel at once that he is being personally addressed by the writer. How absolutely different it is from (for example) the detached 'grand' style of Gibbon of which you have a specimen in Group VIII, or even from that of Newman in the piece which follows this.

### C. ASSIGNMENTS

1. Mention some examples, from your own experience, which show how necessary it is to possess 'the social sense'.

2. Explain clearly: 'Liberty is not a personal affair only, but a social contract.'

3. To what extent do you think that the State should interfere with the lives of individuals?

## THE CHARACTER OF A GENTLEMAN

### §1

[KEY-QUESTION: *What is the chief characteristic of a gentleman's conduct towards other persons?*]

It is almost a definition of a gentleman to say that he is one who never inflicts pain. This description is both noble and, as far as it goes, accurate. He is mainly occupied in merely removing the obstacles which hinder the free and unembarrassed action of those about him; and he concurs with their movements rather than takes the initiative himself. His benefits may be considered as parallel to what are called comforts or conveniences in arrangements of a personal nature; like an easy-chair or a good fire, which do their

part in dispelling cold and fatigue, though nature provides both means of rest and animal heat without them.

The true gentleman in like manner carefully avoids whatever may cause a jar or a jolt in the minds of those with whom he associates ;—all clashing of opinion, or collision of feeling, all restraint, or suspicion, or gloom, or resentment ; his great concern being to make everyone at their ease and at home. He has his eyes on all his company ; he is tender towards the bashful, gentle towards the distant, and merciful towards the absurd ; he can recollect to whom he is speaking ; he guards against unseasonable allusions, or topics which irritate ; he is seldom prominent in conversation, never wearisome. He makes light of favours while he does them, and seems to be receiving when he is conferring. He never speaks of himself except when compelled, never defends himself by a mere retort, he has no ears for slander or gossip, is unwilling to impute motives to those who interfere with him, and interprets everything for the best. He is never mean or little in his disputes, never takes unfair advantage, never mistakes personalities or sharp sayings for arguments or insinuates evil, which he dare not say out.

From a far-seeing prudence, he observes the maxim of the ancient sage, that we should ever conduct ourselves towards our enemy as if he were one day to be our friend. He has too much good sense to be affronted at insults, he is too well employed to remember injuries, and too tolerant to bear malice.

## §2

[KEY-QUESTION: *How does a gentleman behave when he has to engage in controversy especially over religious matters?*]

He is patient, forbearing, and resigned, on philosophical principles; he submits to pain because it is inevitable, to bereavement, because it is irreparable, and to death, because it is his destiny. If he engages in controversy of any kind, his disciplined intellect preserves him from the blundering discourtesy of better, perhaps, but less educated minds; who, like blunt weapons, tear and hack instead of cutting clean, who mistake the point in argument, waste their strength on trifles, misconceive their adversary, and leave the question more involved than they find it.

He may be right or wrong in his opinions, but he is too clear-headed to be unjust; he is as simple as he is forcible, and as brief as he is decisive. Nowhere shall we find greater candour, consideration, indulgence; he throws himself into the minds of his opponents, he accounts for their mistakes. He knows the weakness of human reason as well as its strength, its province and its limits.

If he be an unbeliever, he will be too profound and large-minded to ridicule religion or to act against it; he is too wise to be a dogmatist or fanatic in his infidelity. He respects piety and devotion, he even supports institutions as venerable, beautiful or useful, to which he does not assent; he honours the ministers of religion, and it contents him to reject its mysteries without

assailing or denouncing them. He is a friend of religious toleration, and that not only because his philosophy has taught him to look on all forms of faith with an impartial eye, but also from the gentleness and tenderness of feeling, which is the attendant on civilization.

CARDINAL J. H. NEWMAN  
(From *The Idea of a University*)

## NOTES

### INTRODUCTION

Newman was the most famous religious writer and preacher of the 19th century, and as he changed his religion about the middle of his lifetime, and became a Roman Catholic (he was first a Protestant clergyman), he naturally got drawn into controversies in defence of his new beliefs. Disputes about religion often become bitter, but Newman never allowed himself to depart from the standard which, in this famous passage from his book *The Idea of a University*, he himself set up as being proper for a true 'gentleman'.

### A. COMPREHENSION

**§1. The gentleman's attitude in relation to other personalities**

#### KEY-QUESTION

'What is the chief characteristic of a gentleman's conduct towards other persons?'

#### EXPLANATIONS

**removing the obstacles . . . initiative himself :**  
a gentleman always tries to put others at their ease: he falls in with whatever others are doing, instead of trying to impose his wishes or ways upon them.

**the distant:** people who are inclined to keep to themselves; somewhat reserved, unsociable people.

**he can recollect . . . allusions:** he is careful to consider, before he speaks, whether what he is going to say is appropriate to the person to whom he is speaking; he will not refer to matters likely to cause pain to others. Unseasonable = not suitable to the occasion.

**makes light of favours while he does them:** when he helps a person, he does it in such a way as not to make the person feel that he has done a great favour.

**never mistakes personalities . . . for arguments:** some people, instead of arguing on the subject under discussion, make personal attacks on those who hold opposing views; a gentleman never does this.

**never insinuates evil which he dare not say out:** he does not hint at things with a view to making others believe evil: if he makes up his mind to attack an evil, he attacks it openly: if he cannot do that, he keeps silent.

**our enemies . . . to be our friend:** if the man who is now your enemy is to become your friend later on, you will be careful not to injure him now.

## §2. The gentleman's attitude in relation to opposed opinions

### KEY-QUESTION

'How does a gentleman behave when he engages in controversy, especially over religious matters?'

### EXPLANATIONS

**on philosophical principles:** the study of philosophy is supposed to help a man to understand life, so a philosopher ought to be able to bear unpleasant things more patiently than other people can.

**the blundering discourtesy . . . minds:** people who have better (i.e. cleverer) minds are sometimes rude

to others who are less clever, because they are impatient at their slowness in understanding, but a gentleman controls himself, and never does this. The man who is rude may show himself to be clever, but he proves by his rudeness that he is not so well educated, or civilized.

**he is as simple . . . decisive** : his arguments may be simple, but they are convincing : they may be brief, but they settle the question.

**throws himself into the minds of his opponents** : he looks at things from their point of view, in order to understand why they hold the opinions they do.

**its province** : its scope, (i.e. how far man's reasoning faculty can be usefully employed, and on what matters it is not a safe guide).

**it contents him . . . denouncing them** : he does not attack religious beliefs when held by others ; he simply rejects for himself what is unacceptable to his reason.

**is the attendant on civilization** : is one of the things which a civilized man also possesses.

## B. APPRECIATION

Newman wrote regarding his own style : 'It is simply the fact that I have been obliged to take great pains with everything I have written, and I often write chapters over and over again, besides innumerable corrections and interlinear additions. I am not stating this as a merit, only that some persons write their best first, and I never do. . . . However, I may truly say that I have never been in the practice, since I was a boy, of attempting to write well or to form an elegant style. I think I have never written for writing's sake, but my one and single desire and aim has been to do what is so difficult, viz. to explain clearly and exactly my meaning: this has been the whole principle of all my corrections and re-writings.'

When you read the passage from Newman, you can feel that the writer has considered every word and phrase when writing it: but it is not mere 'writing for writing's sake' because Newman really had something to say, and was keen on saying it as well as possible. You cannot write well or interestingly unless you are really interested in your subject.

### C. ASSIGNMENTS

1. Tabulate the various points about the conduct of a true gentleman which Newman mentions in this passage, arranging them under the following heads:
  - a. The gentleman's conduct in society
  - b. The gentleman's conduct in conversation
  - c. The gentleman's conduct in controversies
  - d. The gentleman's conduct in adversity
  - e. The gentleman's conduct regarding religious affairs.
2. Give two examples of striking similes from this piece. Explain the force of both of them

### NOTES ON AUTHORS OF GROUP IV

- C. E. M. JOAD (1891- ) is a public school and Oxford man. He was a Civil Servant from 1914 to 1920. He is now head of the Department of Philosophy and Psychology at Birkbeck College, University of London. He holds strongly pacifist views and his recently published autobiography is called *Under the Fifth Rib*. He has written several books dealing with problems of the modern world, particularly those relating to Science, Religion and Politics.
- A. G. GARDINER (1865- ) is a famous modern journalist. He was editor of the *London Daily News* from 1902 to 1919, and is famous for the clever word-portraits of his contemporaries which



are included in his books called *Prophets, Priests and Kings; Pillars of Society* and *The War-Lords*.

CARDINAL JOHN HENRY NEWMAN (1801-1890) was educated at Oxford and became a Protestant clergyman. After some time, however, he changed his religious opinions and became a Roman Catholic. This involved him in much controversy and a good deal of his literary work consists of articles in support of his faith. For four years, however, he was Rector of the Catholic University, Dublin, and it was during that time that he delivered the series of lectures on *The Idea of a University*, from which our extract is taken.

## GROUP V—CHARACTER-STUDIES

### A WHITEWASHED UNCLE

#### § I

[KEY-QUESTION : *What did the children dislike in Uncle Thomas ?*]

In our small lives that day was eventful when another uncle was to come down from town, and submit his character and qualifications (albeit unconsciously) to our careful criticism. Earlier uncles had been weighed in the balance, and, alas ! found grievously wanting. There was Uncle Thomas—a failure from the first. Not that his disposition was malevolent, nor were his habits such as to unfit him for decent society ; but his rooted conviction seemed to be that the reason of a child's existence was to serve as a butt for senseless adult jokes—or what, from the accompanying guffaws of laughter, appeared to be intended for jokes. Now, we were anxious that he should have a perfectly fair trial ; so in the tool-house, between breakfast and lessons, we discussed and examined all his witticisms one by one, calmly, critically, dispassionately. It was no good : we could not discover any salt in them and as only a genuine gift of humour could have saved Uncle Thomas—for he pretended to naught besides—he was reluctantly writ down a hopeless impostor.

## §2

[KEY-QUESTION: *In what way did Uncle George at first seem to be better than Uncle Thomas?*]

Uncle George—the youngest—was distinctly more promising. He accompanied us cheerily round the establishment—suffered himself to be introduced to each of the cows—held out the right hand of fellowship to the pig—and even hinted that a pair of pink-eyed Himalayan rabbits might arrive—unexpectedly—from town some day. We were just considering whether in this fertile soil an apparently accidental remark on the solid qualities of guinea-pigs or ferrets might haply blossom and bring forth fruit, when our governess appeared on the scene. Uncle George's manner at once underwent a complete and contemptible change. His interest in rational topics seemed, 'like a fountain's sickening pulse,' to flag and ebb away; and though Miss Smedley's ostensible purpose was to take Selina for her usual walk, I can vouch for it that Selina spent her morning ratting along with the keeper's boy and me; while if Miss Smedley walked with anyone, it would appear to have been with Uncle George.

But despicable as his conduct had been, he underwent no hasty condemnation. The defecation was discussed in all its bearings, but it seemed sadly clear at last that this uncle must possess some innate badness of character and fondness for low company. We who from daily experience knew Miss Smedley like a book, were we not only too well aware that she had neither

accomplishments nor charms—no characteristic, in fact, but an inbred viciousness of temper and disposition? True, she knew the dates of the English kings by heart; but how could that profit Uncle George, who, having passed into the army, had ascended beyond the need of useful information? Our bows and arrows, on the other hand, had been freely placed at his disposal; and a soldier should not have hesitated in his choice for a moment. No: Uncle George had fallen from grace, and was unanimously damned. And the non-arrival of the Himalayan rabbits was only another nail in his coffin. Uncles, therefore, were just then a heavy and lifeless market, and there was little inclination to deal. Still it was agreed that Uncle William, who had just returned from India, should have as fair a trial as the others—more especially as romantic possibilities might well be embodied in one who had held the gorgeous East in fee.

## §3

[KEY-QUESTION: *What was the defect in Uncle William?*]

Selina had kicked my shins—like the girl she is!—during a scuffle in the passage, and I was still rubbing them with one hand when I found that the uncle-on-approbation was half-heartedly shaking the other. A ~~florid~~ <sup>florid</sup>, elderly man, quite unmistakably nervous, he let drop one grimy paw after another, and, turning very red, with an awkward simulation of heartiness, 'Well, h'are

y'all?' he said. 'Glad to see me, eh?' As we could hardly, in justice, be expected to have formed an opinion on him at that early stage, we could but look at each other in silence; which scarce served to relieve the tension of the situation. Indeed, the cloud never really lifted during his stay. In talking things over later, someone put forward the suggestion that he must at some time or other have committed a stupendous crime. But I could not bring myself to believe that the man, though evidently unhappy, was really guilty of anything; and I caught him once or twice looking at us with evident kindness, though, seeing himself observed, he blushed and turned away his head.

## §4

[KEY-QUESTION :<sup>1</sup>]

When at last the atmosphere was clear of his depressing influence, we met despondently in the potato-cellar—all of us—that is, but Harold, who had been told off to accompany his relative to the station; and the feeling was unanimous that, as an uncle, William could not be allowed to pass. Selina roundly declared him a beast, pointing out that he had not even got us a half-holiday; and, indeed, there seemed little to do but pass sentence. We were about to put it to the vote, when Harold appeared on the scene—his red face, round eyes, and mysterious demeanour hinting at awful por-

<sup>1</sup> To be supplied by the student, as an exercise.

tents. Speechless he stood a space ; then slowly drawing his hand from the pocket of his knickerbockers, he displayed on a dirty palm one—two—three—four half-crowns ! We could but gaze—tranced, breathless, mute. Never had any of us seen, in the aggregate, so much bullion before. Then Harold told his tale.

‘I took the old fellow to the station,’ he said, ‘and as we went along I told him all about the stationmaster’s family, and how I had seen the porter kissing our housemaid, and what a nice fellow he was, with no airs or affectation about him, and anything I thought would be of interest ; but he didn’t seem to pay much attention, but walked along puffing his cigar, and once I thought—I’m not certain, but I *thought*—I heard him say, “Well, thank God, that’s over !” When we got to the station he stopped suddenly and said, “Hold on a minute !” Then he shoved these into my hand in a frightened sort of way, and said, “Look here, youngster ! these are for you and the other kids. Buy what you like—make little beasts of yourselves—only don’t tell the old people, mind ! Now cut away home !” So I cut.’

A solemn hush fell on the assembly, broken first by the small Charlotte. ‘I didn’t know,’ she observed dreamily, ‘that there were such good men anywhere in the world. I hope he’ll die to-night, for then he’ll go straight to heaven !’ But the repentant Selina bewailed herself with tears and sobs, refusing to be comforted ; for that in her haste she had called this white-souled relative a beast.

## §5

[KEY-QUESTION: *What did the children decide to do to show honour to the memory of Uncle William?*]

'I'll tell you what we'll do,' said Edward, the master-mind, rising as he always did to the situation: 'we'll christen the piebald pig after him—the one that hasn't got a name yet. And that'll show we're sorry for our mistake.'

'I—I christened that pig this morning,' Harold guiltily confessed; 'I christened it after the curate. I'm very sorry. But he came and bowled to me last night, after you others had all been sent to bed early; and somehow I felt I *had* to do it.'

'Oh, but that doesn't count,' said Edward hastily, 'because we weren't all there. We'll take that christening off, and call it Uncle William. And you can save up the curate for the next litter.'

And the motion being agreed to without a division, the House went into Committee of Supply.

KENNETH GRAHAME

(From *The Golden Age*)

## NOTES

## INTRODUCTION

In this piece, grown-up people and their actions are described as they appear through the eyes of children. Keep this in mind as you read the piece. Think of yourself as one of the children in the story, and see how the uncles and the governess appear to the child.

## A. COMPREHENSION

## §1. Uncle Thomas is described

## KEY-QUESTION

‘What did the children dislike in Uncle Thomas?’

## EXPLANATIONS

**albeit unconsciously** : albeit=although, i.e. the uncles did not know they were being criticized by the children.

**weighed in the balance** : (metaphor) the good and bad qualities of the uncles were considered and compared.

**rooted conviction** : fixed idea.

**butt** : target (metaphor) he aimed his silly jokes at the children, made fun of them.

**salt** : (metaphor) witty point : as salt gives the food flavour, so a witty point makes a joke really amusing.

**impostor** : pretender.

## §2. Uncle George is described

## KEY-QUESTION

‘In what way did Uncle George at first seem to be better than Uncle Thomas?’

## SECONDARY QUESTION

‘What caused the change in his behaviour, which disappointed the children?’

## EXPLANATIONS

**the right hand of fellowship** : when people are introduced, they usually shake hands with the right hand. The children regarded their pet pig as a friend to be introduced to their uncle.

**we were just considering . . . . scene** : as Uncle George seemed to be a generous man, the children were thinking of asking him to make them a present of some more pet animals.



**rational**: what is reasonable. It seemed rational to the children to be interested in their pets, and not in the governess; but Uncle George, being a grown-up, had different interests.

**like a fountain's sickening pulse**: (simile) gradually dying away and stopping altogether, as the water of a fountain stops gushing out when the tap is turned off.

**low company**: the children regarded the company of their governess as base, in comparison with the company of their pet animals, and they despised Uncle George for thinking otherwise.

**beyond the need of useful information**: the children thought that when one became a grown-up one had no more need to learn, so why should Uncle George wish to talk to Miss Smedley their teacher?

**fallen from grace**: gone out of favour.

**another nail in his coffin**: his good reputation was dead and buried (metaphor), and this was confirmed when he forgot to send the promised gift of rabbits.

**heavy and lifeless market**: (metaphor) comparing Uncle George with a commodity for which there is no demand in the market.

**held the gorgeous East in fee**: (quotation from Wordsworth's Sonnet 'On the Extinction of the Venetian Republic'). Uncle William, having been an important man in India, might prove interesting, the children hoped.

§3. Uncle William, just returned from India, visits them

#### KEY-QUESTION

'What was the defect in Uncle William?'

#### EXPLANATIONS

**approbation**: approval (on approbation=to be tested).

**paw**: generally used of an animal's foot; here it is used humorously of the children's dirty hands.

**h'are y'all?**: Uncle William's way of saying 'How are you all?'

**the cloud never really lifted**: (metaphor) everything seemed gloomy as on a cloudy day.

#### §4. How Uncle William's character was 'white-washed'

##### KEY-QUESTION

'What changed the children's opinion of Uncle William?'

##### EXPLANATIONS

**potato-cellar**: potatoes are stored in a dark underground room, to preserve them.

**bullion**: precious metal in large quantities. Used here as a humorous exaggeration; ten shillings was an immense sum of money to the children.

**make little beasts of yourselves**: behave like little animals, spend all the money on sweet-meats, and over-eat.

**cut away**: (slang) run away quickly.

**I hope he'll die to-night etc**: Christians believe that those who do good actions go to heaven after death, but not those who do evil. The child thinks that it would be good for Uncle William to die immediately after having done such a good deed, as then he would be sure to go to heaven.

**White-souled**: virtuous; (white is used in the sense of good, as opposed to black meaning sinful).

##### SECONDARY QUESTION

'What were Uncle William's real feelings about his visit to his nephews and nieces? Why was he "evidently unhappy"?''

#### §5. How the children commemorated Uncle William's visit

##### KEY-QUESTION

'What did the children decide to do, to show honour to the memory of this uncle?'

## EXPLANATIONS

**christen the piebald pig after him:** the children gave names to all their pet animals. To give one of their pets the same name as one of their friends, was considered by them to be an honour to that person. Piebald=spotted. Christening=the Christian ceremony of name-giving.

**you can save up the curate for the next litter:** the curate (assistant to the vicar or chief priest of the church) had pleased Harold by bowling for him, so Harold had decided to do him the honour of naming the pig after him; but Edward decided that this should be cancelled because the other children had not been present on the occasion. To compensate for this, he promised that one of the next lot of young pigs should be named after the curate.

**Committee of Supply:** the name given to the assembly of the House of Commons (Parliament) when it meets to discuss questions of expenditure. Here it is a humorous exaggeration meaning that the children met to discuss how to spend the 10s. given by Uncle William.

## SECONDARY QUESTION

'How was Uncle William's character "white-washed"?' Explain the idea contained in the metaphor 'white-washed'.

## B. APPRECIATION

The humour of this piece lies in the contrast between the children's point of view and that of grown-ups. Here are some examples:—

- (a) Uncle Thomas' jokes. (b) Uncle George preferring the company of the governess to playing with the children's bows and arrows. (c) Uncle William not being interested in Harold's account of the porter kissing the housemaid. (d) The children's idea of showing honour to people by naming animals after them.

## C ASSIGNMENTS

1. Give examples of four metaphors in this piece.
2. Give examples of humorous exaggeration in this piece.
3. Which Uncle was the most unsatisfactory to the children, and in what way?
4. Explain the significance of the title of this piece.

## OLIVER GOLDSMITH

## §1

[KEY-QUESTION: *What are the opposing qualities in Goldsmith's character?*]

Who, of the millions whom he has amused, doesn't love him? To be the most beloved of English writers, what a title that is for a man!

A wild youth, wayward, but full of tenderness and affection, quits the country village where his boyhood has been passed in happy musing, in idle shelter, in fond longing to see the great world out-of-doors, and achieve name and fortune; and after years of dire struggle, and neglect and poverty, his heart turning back as fondly to his native place as it had longed eagerly for change when sheltered there, he writes a book and a poem, full of the recollections and feelings of home: he paints the friends and scenes of his youth, and peoples Auburn and Wakefield with remembrances of Lissoy.

Wander he must, but he carries away a home-relic with him, and dies with it on his breast. His

nature is truant ; in repose it longs for change : as on the journey it looks back for friends and quiet. He passes today in building an air-castle for tomorrow, or in writing yesterday's elegy ; and he would fly away this hour, but that a cage and necessity keep him.

## §2

[KEY-QUESTION: *Why do people love Goldsmith's writings ?*]

What is the charm of his verse, of his style and humour ? His sweet regrets, his delicate compassion, his soft smile, his tremulous sympathy, the weakness which he owns ? Your love for him is half pity. You come hot and tired from the day's battle, and this sweet minstrel sings to you. Who could harm the kind vagrant harper ? Whom did he ever hurt ? He carries no weapon, save the harp on which he plays to you ; and with which he delights great and humble, young and old, the captains in the tents, or the soldiers round the fire, or the women and children in the villages, at whose porches he stops and sings his simple song of love and beauty. With that sweet story of the *Vicar of Wakefield* he has found entry into every castle and every hamlet in Europe. Not one of us, however busy or hard, but once or twice in our lives has passed an evening with him, and undergone the charm of his delightful music.

## OLIVER GOLDSMITH

### §3

[KEY-QUESTION :<sup>1</sup>]

Goldsmith's father was no doubt the good Doctor Primrose, whom we all of us know. Swift was yet alive, when the little Oliver was born at Pallas, or Pallasmore, in the county of Longford, in Ireland. In 1730, two years after the child's birth, Charles Goldsmith removed his family to Lissoy, in the county Westmeath, that sweet 'Auburn' which every person who hears me has seen in fancy. Here the kind parson brought up his eight children; and loving all the world, as his son says, fancied all the world loved him. He had a crowd of poor dependents besides those hungry children. He kept an open table; round which sat flatterers and poor friends, who laughed at the honest rector's many jokes and ate the produce of his seventy acres of farm.

### §4

[KEY-QUESTION: *What characteristic of the Irish is shown in this description?*]

Those who have seen an Irish home in the present day can fancy that one of Lissoy. The old beggar still has his allotted corner by the kitchen turf; the maimed old soldier still gets his potatoes and butter-milk; the poor cottier still asks his honour's charity, and prays God bless his reverence for the sixpence; the ragged pensioner still takes his place by right and sufferance.

<sup>1</sup> To be supplied by the student, as an exercise.

There's still a crowd in the kitchen, and a crowd round the parlour table, profusion, confusion, kindness, poverty. If an Irishman comes to London to make his fortune, he has a half-dozen of Irish dependents who take a percentage of his earnings. The good Charles Goldsmith left but little provision for his hungry race when death summoned him; and one of his daughters being engaged to a squire of rather superior dignity, Charles Goldsmith impoverished the rest of his family to provide the girl with a dowry.

## §5

[KEY-QUESTION: *What was prominent about Goldsmith's personal appearance, and about his school life?*]

The small-pox, which scourged all Europe at that time, and ravaged the roses off the cheeks of half the world, fell foul of poor little Oliver's face, when the child was eight years old, and left him scarred and disfigured for his life. An old woman in his father's village taught him his letters, and pronounced him a dunce: Paddy Bryne, the hedge-schoolmaster, took him in hand: and from Paddy Bryne, he was transmitted to a clergyman at Elphin.

When a child was sent to school in those days, the classic phrase was that he was placed under Mr. So-and-so's *ferrule*. Poor little ancestors! It is hard to think how ruthlessly you were birched; and how much of needless whipping and tears our small forefathers had to undergo! A relative—

kind uncle Contarine—took the main charge of little Noll; who went through his school days righteously doing as little work as he could; robbing orchards, playing at ball and making his pocket-money fly about whenever fortune sent it to him.

## §6

[KEY-QUESTION: *What points in Goldsmith's character are revealed in these anecdotes?*]

Everybody knows the story of that famous 'Mistake of a Night', when the young schoolboy, provided with a guinea and a nag, rode up to the 'best house' in Ardagh, called for the landlord's company over a bottle of wine at supper, and for a hot cake for breakfast in the morning; and found, when he asked for the bill, that the best house was Squire Featherstone's, and not the inn for which he mistook it.

Who does not know every story about Goldsmith? That is a delightful and fantastic picture of the child dancing and capering about in the kitchen at home, when the old fiddler giped at him for his ugliness, and called him Aesop; and little Noll made his repartee of 'Heralds proclaim aloud this saying,—See Aesop dancing and his monkey playing'. One can fancy a queer pitiful look of humour and appeal upon that little scarred face—the funny little dancing figure, the funny little brogue. In his life, and his writings which are the honest expression of it, he is constantly bewailing that homely face and person; anon he



surveys them in the glass ruefully ; and presently assumes the most comical dignity. He likes to deck out his little person in splendour and fine colours. He presented himself to be examined for ordination in a pair of scarlet breeches, and said honestly that he did not like to go into the Church because he was fond of coloured clothes. When he tried to practice as a doctor, he got by hook or by crook a black velvet suit, and looked as big and grand as he could, and kept his hat over a patch on the old coat : in better days he bloomed out in plum-colour, in blue silk, and in new velvet. For some of those splendours the heirs and assignees of Mr. Filby, the tailor, have never been paid to this day : perhaps the kind tailor and his creditor have met and settled their little account in Hades.

They showed until lately a window at Trinity College, Dublin, on which the name of O. Goldsmith was engraved with a diamond. Whose diamond was it? Not the young sizar's, who made but a poor figure in that place of learning. He was idle, penniless and fond of pleasure : he learned his way early to the pawnbroker's shop. He wrote ballads, they say, for the street-singer who paid him a crown for a poem, and his pleasure was to steal out at night and hear his verses sung. He was chastised by his tutor for giving a dance in his rooms, and took the box on the ears so much to heart that he packed up his all, pawned his books and little property and disappeared from college and family. He said he intended to go to America, but when his money was spent, the

young prodigal came home ruefully, and the good folks there killed their calf—it was but a lean one—and welcomed him back.

W. M. THACKERAY

(From *The English Humorists of the Eighteenth Century*)

## NOTES

### INTRODUCTION

Thackeray, the author of this piece, was himself a famous novelist. Here he gives us an attractive picture of 'the most beloved of English writers', Oliver Goldsmith, and tries to help us to understand the qualities of Goldsmith and of his writings that have given him a title which still endures, though it is a hundred years since Thackeray wrote.

Read along with this piece, the one entitled 'A Poet's Letter of Adventure', in Group I, and you will get a first-hand idea of the character of Goldsmith by which you can check the truth of what Thackeray says about him, at least in a few points.

### A. COMPREHENSION

#### §1. A brief survey of Goldsmith's character

#### KEY-QUESTION

'What were the opposing qualities in Goldsmith's character?'

#### EXPLANATIONS

**a book and a poem:** *The Vicar of Wakefield* and *The Deserted Village*.

**Auburn:** the name that he gave to the village in his poem.

**Wakefield**: the scene of the story in Goldsmith's novel.

**Lissoy**: the real name of the Irish village where Goldsmith spent his boyhood.

**home-relic**: memories of his home.

**truant** (adjective): always anxious to run away, to seek change.

**air-castle**: a magnificent plan that is unlikely to be carried out.

**yesterday's elegy**: an elegy is a poem on a sad topic, or a song of lamentation, hence the meaning here is that he was thinking regretfully of the past.

**he would fly away this hour . . . . keep him**: Goldsmith was a dreamer, not a practical man: he lived in the past or the future, and tried to escape from the present, but he could not escape the limitations of this world, which imprisoned him, as in a cage, and forced him to think of earning money to buy food and clothing.

## §2. The attractiveness of his writings

### KEY-QUESTION

'Why do people love Goldsmith's writings?'

### EXPLANATIONS

**tremulous**: trembling (with deep feeling).

**the day's battle**: (metaphor) the hard work of the day.

**minstrel**: a wandering singer of the olden days. This aptly describes Goldsmith, for in his youth he actually did wander from village to village through Holland, France, Switzerland and Italy, earning a meal and a bed by playing on the flute. He describes these travels in his poem *The Traveller*.

**harper**: in olden times poetry was sung to the accompaniment of a stringed instrument called the harp or lyre. So poets are sometimes called

'harpers', and short poems expressing emotion are called 'lyrics'.

**passed an evening with him:** i.e., has read his writings and thus come to feel as if we knew him personally.

### §3. Goldsmith's father

#### KEY-QUESTION<sup>1</sup>

#### EXPLANATIONS

**Doctor Primrose:** the chief character in *The Vicar of Wakefield*. Goldsmith's father was also a 'vicar' or 'rector', i.e., the clergyman in charge of a church, and Goldsmith must have been thinking of his father when he described Dr. Primrose in his story. 'Doctor' here means doctor of divinity (study of sacred books), not doctor of medicine.

**Swift:** the famous author of *Gulliver's Travels*.

**has seen in fancy:** because, when you read *The Deserted Village* you can imagine exactly what Auburn must have looked like.

**loving all . . . the world loved him:** he was so simple and kind-hearted that he was sometimes cheated. His son was like him in this.

**open table:** every one was welcome to take food. Compare 'God keeps an open house' in section 2 of 'A Green Caravanserai'.

**seventy acres of farm:** to add to his scanty income as rector, he cultivated a small farm.

### §4. Goldsmith's home

#### KEY-QUESTION

'What characteristic quality of the Irish is shown in this description?'

#### EXPLANATIONS

**turf:** the Irish peasants were very poor and could not afford firewood or coal for their fires, so

<sup>1</sup> To be supplied by the student, as an exercise.

they burned turf or peat, a very inferior, smoky fuel, dug out of the marshes.

**potatoes and butter-milk**: the cheapest kind of food, and the chief food of the Irish peasants.

**cottier**: cottager, poor peasant.

**his honour . . . his reverence**: the peasants, though so poor, were very respectful and addressed social superiors as 'Your Honour', and priests as 'Your Reverence'.

**hungry race**: hungry descendents, children.

**squire**: landowner or 'jagirdar' like Sir Roger (see next piece).

### §5. Goldsmith's boyhood

#### KEY-QUESTION

'What was prominent about Goldsmith's personal appearance, and about his school-days?'

#### EXPLANATIONS

**scourged** (pronounced 'skerged'): chastised, punished.

**roses**: the red colour of the cheeks, indicating good health, and beauty.

**Paddy**: short for 'Patrick', a common Irish name.

**hedge-schoolmaster**: schoolmaster of the countryside, i.e., not a very expert or well-qualified man. Goldsmith describes him in *The Deserted Village*, in a very humorous passage.

**ferrule**: literally the metal cap fixed to the end of a stick to prevent it from splitting; metaphorically used for the schoolmaster's cane, his emblem of power!

**birch**: another instrument of school discipline of that time; it was made of twigs of the birch tree.

**Noll**: shortened form of the name 'Oliver'.

**righteously doing as little work as he could**: this is of course written jestingly: Oliver thought it right to do as little study as he could.

**making his pocket-money fly about**: i.e., spending it freely.

## §6. Anecdotes about Goldsmith

## KEY-QUESTION

'What points in Goldsmith's character are illustrated by each of these anecdotes?'

## EXPLANATIONS

**nag**: slang word for 'horse'.

**best house**: the word 'house' is sometimes used with the meaning of 'inn' or 'hotel'. Goldsmith asked the way to 'the best house', meaning the best inn, and was directed to the best house, in the ordinary sense of the word, i.e., the residence of the most wealthy man of the place.

**capering**: jumping like a goat: 'caper' (in Latin)=goat.

**fiddler**: player on the violin or fiddle. The villagers used to dance to the tune of the fiddle.

**gibed**: mocked.

**Aesop**: the Greek slave who wrote the famous 'Fables'; he is supposed to have been very ugly.

**repartee**: sharp retort or reply.

**monkey playing**: in Europe, as in India, monkeys are taken round the villages and towns to amuse the children.

**brogue**: Irish accent or pronunciation of words.

**assumes . . . dignity**: puts on a dignified air which makes him appear even more comical.

**ordination**: ceremony of admission to the priesthood. For such a solemn religious ceremony brightly coloured clothes were very unsuitable.

**Hades**: the place where people's souls are supposed to live after death.

**Trinity College**: Dublin University.

**sizar**: scholarship-holder who was expected to perform certain menial tasks in return for his scholarship.

**pawnbroker**: a merchant who lends money on the security of small articles of personal property,

returning the articles to the owner when the debt is paid.

**ballads:** popular songs.

**crown:** five shillings; the coin had a crown on it, hence the name.

**box on the ears:** blow on the ears, given as punishment.

**prodigal . . . killed their calf:** this is a reference to the story of the Prodigal Son, in the Bible (St. Luke, Chap. XV). Goldsmith, like the young man in the story, had wasted the money his relatives had given him, but they were so kind-hearted that they welcomed him home, and celebrated his return with a feast ('killed the fatted calf'), as lavishly as their poverty would permit them to do. You should read the story in the Bible.

## B. APPRECIATION

Thackeray infects us with his own enthusiasm for the subject of this piece. In every line we can feel his love and admiration for Goldsmith. If you take the trouble to read at least *The Deserted Village* (a delightful and not very long poem), and the famous novel *The Vicar of Wakefield*, in your spare time, you will gain a real pleasure from the reading of this piece. Anecdotes, such as Thackeray relates here, are a very important part of any biography for they reveal the character in a vivid way, as nothing else can. Dr. Johnson said of his friend Goldsmith: 'As a writer he was of the most distinguished class. Whatever he composed, he did it better than any other man could.'

## C. ASSIGNMENTS

1. Explain what Thackeray means by 'Your love for him is half pity.' Why should we pity Goldsmith?
2. What sort of education did Goldsmith receive?
3. What circumstances of Goldsmith's life have left their mark clearly on his writings?

4. Narrate the anecdote of Goldsmith which you consider to be the most amusing of those you have read.

5. Write an appreciation of either *The Deserted Village* or *The Vicar of Wakefield*.

## SIR ROGER AND WILL WIMBLE

### § I

[KEY-QUESTION: *What two qualities of Will Wimble are revealed in this letter of his?*]

As I was yesterday morning walking with Sir Roger before his house, a country fellow brought him a huge fish, which, he told him, Mr. William Wimble had caught that very morning; and that he presented it, with his service to him, and intended to come and dine with him. At the same time he delivered a letter, which my friend read to me as soon as the messenger left him.

'Sir Roger,

'I desire you to accept of a jack, which is the best I have caught this season. I intend to come and stay with you a week, and see how the perch bite in the Black River. I observed with some concern, the last time I saw you upon the bowling-green, that your whip wanted a lash to it; I will bring half-a-dozen with me, that I twisted last week, which I hope will serve you all the time you are in the country. I have not been out of the saddle for six days last past, having been



at Eaton with Sir John's eldest son. He takes to his learning hugely.

I am,  
Sir,  
Your humble servant,  
Will Wimble.'

## §2

[KEY-QUESTION: *What caused Will to be 'the darling of the country' ?*]

This extraordinary letter, and message that accompanied it, made me very curious to know the character and quality of the gentleman who sent them; which I found to be as follows. Will Wimble is younger brother to a baronet, and descended of the ancient family of the Wimbles. He is now between forty and fifty; but being bred to no business and born to no estate, he generally lives with his elder brother as superintendent of his game. He hunts a pack of dogs better than any man in the country, and is very famous for finding out a hare. He is extremely well versed in all the little handicrafts of an idle man; he makes a mayfly to a miracle; and furnishes the whole country with angle-rods. As he is a good-natured officious fellow, and very much esteemed upon account of his family, he is a welcome guest at every house, and keeps up a good correspondence among all the gentlemen about him. He carries a tulip-root in his pocket from one to another, or exchanges a puppy between a couple

of friends that live perhaps in the opposite sides of the country. Will is a particular favourite of all the young heirs, whom he frequently obliges with a net that he has weaved, or a setting-dog that he has made himself. These gentleman-like manufactures and obliging little humours make Will the darling of the country.

### §3

[KEY-QUESTION: *What were Will's chief interests?*]

Sir Roger was proceeding in the character of him, when we saw him make up to us with two or three hazel-twigs in his hand that he had cut in Sir Roger's woods, as he came through them, in his way to the house. I was very much pleased to observe on one side the hearty and sincere welcome with which Sir Roger received him, and on the other, the secret joy which his guest discovered at sight of the good old knight. After the first salutes were over, Will desired Sir Roger to lend him one of his servants to carry a set of shuttlecocks he had with him in a little box to a lady that lived about a mile off, to whom it seems he had promised such a present for above this half year. Sir Roger's back was no sooner turned but honest Will began to tell me of a large cock-pheasant that he had sprung in one of the neighbouring woods, with two or three other adventures of the same nature. Odd and uncommon characters are the game that I look for, and most delight in; for which reason I was as much pleased with

the novelty of the person that talked to me, as he could be for his life with the springing of a pheasant, and therefore listened to him with more than ordinary attention.

In the midst of his discourse the bell rung to dinner, where the gentleman I have been speaking of had the pleasure of seeing the huge jack he had caught, served up for the first dish in a most sumptuous manner. Upon our sitting down to it he gave us a long account how he had hooked it, played with it, foiled it, and at length drew it out upon the bank, with several other particulars that lasted all the first course. A dish of wild fowl that came afterwards furnished conversation for the rest of the dinner, which concluded with a late invention of Will's for improving the quail-pipe.

#### §4

[KEY-QUESTION: *What was the chief defect in Will?*]

Upon withdrawing into my room after dinner, I was secretly touched with compassion towards the honest gentleman that had dined with us : and could not but consider with a great deal of concern, how so good an heart and such busy hands were wholly employed in trifles : that so much humanity should be so little beneficial to others, and so much industry so little advantageous to himself. The same temper of mind and application to affairs might have recommended him to the public esteem, and have raised his fortune in another

station of life. What good to his country or himself might not a trader or a merchant have done with such useful though ordinary qualifications?

Will Wimble's is the case of many a younger brother of a great family, who had rather see their children starve like gentlemen, than thrive in a trade or profession that is beneath their quality. This humour fills several parts of Europe with pride and beggary. It is the happiness of a trading nation, like ours, that the younger sons, though incapable of any liberal art or profession, may be placed in such a way of life, as may perhaps enable them to vie with the best of their family; accordingly we find several citizens that were launched into the world with narrow fortunes, rising by an honest industry to greater estates than those of their elder brothers. It is not improbable but Will was formerly tried at divinity, law, or physic; and that finding his genius did not lie that way, his parents gave him up at length to his own inventions. But certainly, however improper he might have been for studies of a higher nature, he was perfectly well turned for the occupations of trade and commerce.

JOSEPH ADDISON  
(From *The Spectator*)

## NOTES

### INTRODUCTION

Sir Roger, mentioned in this piece, was a character invented by Joseph Addison, who wrote many interesting stories about him in his journal, *The Spectator*. Sir

Roger represents the typical English squire, and corresponds roughly to what we should call a jagirdar in India. The name of his jagir, or estate, was Coverley, so his full name was Sir Roger de Coverley ('de'=of). The other character, Will Wimble, was the younger son of a lord. Addison shows in this story what a nice fellow Will was, but how wasted his life was, because, being a rich man's son, he had no need to work.

## A. COMPREHENSION

### §1. Will Wimble's letter

#### KEY-QUESTION

'What two qualities of Will Wimble are shown in this letter of his?'

#### EXPLANATIONS

**he presented it, with his service to him :** now-days we should say 'with his compliments': it means that Will, the younger man, offered his service to Sir Roger, his senior and superior

**jack: perch :** two kinds of fish found in English rivers.

**bowling-green :** the 'green' or grass lawn on which the game of bowls was played. Bowls is a game in which large wooden balls are rolled as near as possible to a small white ball which is first thrown towards the opposite end of the lawn.

**your whip wanted a lash to it:** the lash, the thin end of the whip, is apt to get worn out by constant use, and has to be frequently replaced.

**Eaton :** the famous public school, now spelt 'Eton'.

### §2. Will Wimble's occupations and habits

#### KEY-QUESTION

'What caused Will to be "the darling of the country"?'

## EXPLANATIONS

**baronet:** a lord and great land-owner, in those days.

**bred to no business and born to no estate:** in England all the property goes to the eldest son, so younger sons inherit nothing ('born to no estate'): so, unless they are 'bred' or trained to follow some profession, they are dependant on their elder brothers, as in Will's case. Will helped his brother by taking care of the 'game', '*shikar*' as we should call it in India.

**he hunts a pack of dogs:** it means that he hunts *by means of* the dogs: dogs (hounds) are used for hunting foxes, and men accompany them on horseback, mainly for the pleasure of the chase and hard riding, for foxes are not used for food.

**makes a mayfly to a miracle:** is marvellously clever in making the artificial fly used for some kinds of fishing.

**angle-rods:** to 'angle' is to fish with a line fixed to a long rod. A special kind of wood is used for the rod, and Will was clever in finding it and making rods out of it.

**officious:** this word is now usually used only in a bad sense, meaning 'interfering'. But when Addison wrote it meant simply 'anxious to assist'.

**carries a tulip-root . . . exchanges a puppy:** examples of the small kindly services performed by Will. Some of his friends grew different kinds of flowers as a hobby: others used to breed dogs, and, as there were no railways in those days, it took a considerable time to send things from one to another. Will used to go on horseback, and was always willing to oblige others by carrying things.

**setting-dog:** the boys of wealthy families (young heirs) amused themselves by fishing with nets or catching wild animals in traps, called 'setting-dogs' because they have jaws with sharp teeth like a dog's, held open or 'set' by a spring.

**gentleman-like:** gentlemanly (adjective).

**humours:** whims, amusing or pleasing ways.

### §3. Will's arrival and conversation

#### KEY-QUESTION

'What incident described in this section shows Will's kind-hearted nature? What topics of the conversation show Will's chief interests?'

#### EXPLANATIONS

**hazel-twigs:** small pliable sticks suitable to use for whips.

**discovered:** revealed or uncovered (the word is not used in this sense nowadays).

**shuttlecocks:** used in playing the game of badminton.

**cock-pheasant he had sprung:** male pheasant (bird) which he had caused to spring (fly away in fright).

✓ **Odd and uncommon . . . I look for:** Addison's form of hunting ('game') was to hunt for peculiar characters and to write about them in the *Spectator*.

**hooked it, played with it, foiled it, etc.:** these are different stages in the capture of a large fish by means of rod and line and hook. When the fish is hooked, it cannot be drawn to land at once, lest its struggles should break the line; so the angler 'plays with it' and lets it exhaust its strength in pulling, and then he defeats it (foils) and draws it on to the bank.

### §4. Addison's thoughts about Will

#### KEY-QUESTION

'What was the chief defect in Will?'

#### EXPLANATIONS

**trifles:** petty things, things of little importance in life.

**humanity:** (abstract noun) kindheartedness.

**the same temper of mind etc.:** if Will had used his good and useful qualities in some business or profession, he would have become popular and successful.

**starve like gentlemen:** have too little to eat rather than lower their dignity by earning a living like common people.

**their quality:** their high position or social rank.

**vie with:** compete with.

**launched:** (metaphor) first sent out into the world, as a ship is first lowered into the water.

**divinity:** the profession of the priesthood.

**turned:** shaped, formed, suited.

#### SECONDARY QUESTION

'What advantages have the younger sons of the aristocracy of a trading nation like the English?'

#### B. APPRECIATION

Observe how skilfully Addison reveals the character of Will by describing events, instead of simply mentioning his qualities, which would be much less interesting. Will's letter, with which the essay opens, at once makes us feel anxious to know something more of this unusual person. This is the art of a great writer.

#### C. ASSIGNMENTS

1. Make a list of some of the little services performed by Will for his friends.

2. 'What good to his country or himself might not a trader or a merchant have done with such useful though ordinary qualifications?' Imagine such a man, as a business man, and say what sort of services he would be likely to render to his country and his fellow-beings.



## NOTES ON THE AUTHORS OF GROUP V

KENNETH GRAHAME (1859- ) is one of the most delightful of living writers of books for children, and he has the faculty of making what he writes equally interesting to grown-ups. He was secretary to the Bank of England for ten years, from 1898 till 1908, but you see that he did not allow his responsible work to make him dull or too serious.

WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY (1811-1863) was one of the greatest novelists of the Victorian era. He was born in Calcutta. He saw the artificiality and insincerity of the fashionable society of his time, and set about to satirize it in his novels. Essentially of the middle class himself, his chief theme was the meanness of those who claim to be noble without possessing true nobility of character. His style is graceful, lively and full of humour. His greatest novel is *Henry Esmond*. The passage we have selected is from a work of his which was originally delivered as a series of lectures.

JOSEPH ADDISON (1672-1719) was one of the great forerunners of modern journalism, and a pioneer of the lighter form of 'essay' of which the one quoted here, from the *Sir Roger de Coverley* series, is typical. These essays first appeared in a weekly paper called *The Spectator*, started in 1711 by Addison and his friend Sir Richard Steele. Dr. Johnson wrote of Addison's style: 'Whoever wishes to attain an English style, familiar but not coarse, and elegant but not ostentatious, must give his days and nights to the volumes of Addison.'

## GROUP VI—BOOKS

### MY BOOKS

#### §1

[KEY-QUESTION: *How did Gissing's books get damaged ?*]

As often as I survey my bookshelves I am reminded of Lamb's 'ragged veterans'. Not that all my volumes came from the second-hand stall; many of them were neat enough in new covers, some were even stately in fragrant bindings, when they passed into my hands. But so often have I removed, so rough has been the treatment of my little library at each change of place, and, to tell the truth, so little care have I given to its well-being at normal times (for in all practical matters I am idle and inept), that even the comeliest of my books show the results of unfair usage. More than one has been foully injured by a great nail driven into a packing-case—this but the extreme instance of the wrongs they have undergone. Now that I have leisure and peace of mind, I find myself growing more careful—an illustration of the great truth that virtue is made easy by circumstance. But I confess that, so long as a volume holds together, I am not much troubled as to its outer appearance.

## §2

[KEY-QUESTION :<sup>1</sup>]

I know men who say they had as lief read any book in a library copy as in one from their own shelf. To me that is unintelligible. For one thing, I know every book of mine by its scent, and I have but to put my nose between the pages to be reminded of all sorts of things. My Gibbon, for example, my well-bound eight-volume Milman edition, which I have read and read and read again for more than thirty years—never do I open it but the scent of the noble page restores to me all the exultant happiness of that moment when I received it as a prize. Or my Shakespeare, the great Cambridge Shakespeare—it has an odour which carries me yet further back in life; for these volumes belonged to my father, and before I was old enough to read them with understanding, it was often permitted me, as a treat, to take down one of them from the bookcase, and reverently to turn the leaves. The volumes smell exactly as they did in that old time, and what a strange tenderness comes upon me when I hold one of them in hand! For that reason I do not often read Shakespeare in this edition. My eyes being good as ever, I take the Globe volume, which I bought in days when such a purchase was something more than an extravagance; wherefore I regard the book with that peculiar affection which results from sacrifice.

<sup>1</sup> To be supplied by the student, as an exercise.

## §3

[KEY-QUESTION: *What made Gissing value this copy of Tibullus?*]

Sacrifice—in no drawing-room sense of the word. Dozens of my books were purchased with money which ought to have been spent upon what are called the necessities of life. Many a time I have stood before a stall, or a bookseller's window, torn by conflict of intellectual desire and bodily need. At the very hour of dinner, when my stomach clamoured for food, I have been stopped by sight of a volume so long coveted, and marked at so advantageous a price, that I could not let it go; yet to buy it meant pangs of famine. My Heyne's *Tibullus* was grasped at such a moment. It lay on the stall of the old bookshop in Goodge Street—a stall where now and then one found an excellent thing among quantities of rubbish. Sixpence was the price—sixpence! At that time I used to eat my midday meal (of course, my dinner) at a coffee-shop in Oxford Street, one of the real old coffee-shops, such as now, I suppose, can hardly be found. Sixpence was all I had, yes—all I had in the world; it would purchase a plate of meat and vegetables. But I did not dare to hope that the *Tibullus* would wait until the morrow, when a certain small sum fell due to me. I paced the pavement, fingering the coppers in my pocket, eyeing the stall, two appetites, at combat within me. The book was bought and I went home with it, and as I made a dinner of bread and butter I gloated over the pages.

In this *Tibullus* I found pencilled on the last page: 'Perlegi, Oct. 4, 1792.' Who was that possessor of the book, nearly a hundred years ago? There was no other inscription. I like to imagine some poor scholar, poor and eager as I myself, who bought the volume with drops of his blood, and enjoyed the reading of it even as I did. How much that was I could not easily say. Gentle-hearted *Tibullus*!

An tacitum silvas inter salubres,  
Curantem quidquid dignum sapiente bonoque est?

#### §4

[KEY-QUESTION: *What sacrifice did he make in order to get his copy of Gibbon, and how did he lose the book at last?*]

So with many another book on the thronged shelves. To take them down is to recall, how vividly, a struggle and a triumph. In those days money represented nothing to me, nothing I cared to think about, but the acquisition of books. There were books of which I had passionate need, books more necessary to me than bodily nourishment. I could see them, of course, at the British Museum, but that was not at all the same thing as having and holding them, my own property, on my own shelf. Now and then I have bought a volume of the raggedest and wretchedest aspect, dishonoured with foolish scribbling, torn, blotted—no matter, I liked the better to read out of that than out of a copy that was not mine. But I was guilty at times of mere self-indulgence; a book

tempted me, a book which was not one of those for which I really craved, a luxury which prudence might bid me forego. As, for instance, my *Jung-Stilling*. It caught my eye in Holywell Street; the name was familiar to me in *Wahrheit und Dichtung*, and curiosity grew as I glanced over the pages. But that day I resisted; in truth, I could not afford the eighteenpence, which means that just then I was poor indeed. Twice again did I pass, each time assuring myself that *Jung-Stilling* had found no purchaser. There came a day when I was in funds. I see myself hastening to Holywell Street (in those days my habitual pace was five miles an hour), I see the little grey old man with whom I transacted my business—what was his name?—the bookseller who had been, I believe, a Catholic priest, and still had a certain priestly dignity about him. He took the volume, opened it, mused for a moment, then, with a glance at me, said, as if thinking aloud: 'Yes, I wish I had time to read it.'

Sometimes I added the labour of a porter to my fasting endured for the sake of books. At the little shop near Portland Road Station I came upon a first edition of Gibbon, the price an absurdity—I think it was a shilling a volume. To possess those clean-paged quartos I would have sold my coat. As it happened I had not money enough with me, but sufficient at home. I was living at Islington. Having spoken with the bookseller, I walked home, took the cash, walked back again, and carried the tomes from the west end of Euston Road to a street in Islington far

beyond the Angel. I did it in two journeys—this being the only time of my life when I thought of Gibbon in avoirdupois. Twice—three times, reckoning the walk for the money—did I descend Euston Road and climbed Pentonville on that occasion. Of the season and the weather I have no recollection; my joy in the purchase I had made drove out every other thought. Except, indeed, of the weight. I had infinite energy, but not much muscular strength, and the end of the last journey saw me upon a chair, perspiring, flaccid, aching—exultant!

The well-to-do person would hear this story with astonishment. Why did I not get the bookseller to send me the volumes? Or, if I could not wait, was there no omnibus along that London highway? How could I make the well-to-do person understand that I did not feel able to afford, that day, one penny more than I had spent on the book? No, no, such labour-saving expenditure did not come within my scope; whatever I enjoyed I earned it, literally, by the sweat of my brow. In those days I hardly knew what it was to travel by omnibus. I have walked London streets for twelve and fifteen hours together without ever a thought of saving my legs, or my time, by paying for waftage. Being poor as poor can be, there were certain things I had to renounce, and this was one of them.

Years after, I sold my first edition of Gibbon for even less than it cost me; it went with a great many other fine books in folio and quarto, which I could not drag about with me in my constant

removals ; the man who bought them spoke of them as 'tombstones'. Why has Gibbon no market-value? Often has my heart ached with regret for these quartos. The joy of reading the *Decline and Fall* in that fine type ! The page was appropriate to the dignity of the subject ; the mere sight of it tuned one's mind. I suppose I could easily get another copy now ; but it would not be to me what that other was, with its memory of dust and toil.

GEORGE GISSING

(From *The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft*)

## NOTES

### INTRODUCTION

This extract is from Gissing's book, *The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft*. Ryecroft was no other than Gissing himself, so the book is really autobiographical. Authors often use such pen-names. Practically every author, of course, reveals himself in the books that he writes, for his likes and dislikes, and his point of view, show themselves even when he is describing things and persons outside himself, or even invented characters, as in novels. It is much more so, naturally, when he is writing down his own experiences directly, as in an autobiography. Such written experiences are sometimes called 'Memoirs' or 'Memories', and when they are as attractively written as Gissing's are, even the most trifling things become interesting, as you will find.

### A. COMPREHENSION

#### §1. The appearance of Gissing's books

##### KEY-QUESTION .

'How did the author's books get damaged?'



## EXPLANATIONS

**Lamb**: the famous essayist referred to in the extract from Hazlitt's *On Going a Journey*. Lamb also was a great book-lover, and he referred to his old books which had torn covers as 'ragged veterans', comparing them to old servants or soldiers whose clothes have become torn from long service.

**second-hand stall**: small shop where books can be bought second-hand, at cheap rates.

**fragrant bindings**: some of the costly kinds of leather used for binding books have a pleasant scent.

**so often have I removed**: Gissing had been very poor in his younger days, and had to live in cheap lodgings whenever he had not enough money to stay in a better place

**the great truth that virtue is made easy by circumstance**: it is easier to be good when you have no great difficulties in your daily life, such as poverty. (What is your opinion on this? It is a good subject for a debate.)

## §2. Why one should have one's own books

KEY-QUESTION<sup>1</sup>

## EXPLANATIONS

**had as lief**: would with as much willingness.

**by its scent**: this shows how familiar his books were to him.

**Gibbon**: see the passage on 'The Roman Empire' in Group VIII.

**Milman edition**: Gibbon's great work was edited by Dean Milman and printed in eight volumes. It is a book often awarded as a prize for History.

**The great Cambridge Shakespeare**: all Shakespeare's plays, published in nine volumes by the Cambridge University Press, in 1863.

**the Globe volume**: all Shakespeare's plays printed in one volume by Macmillan & Co. The

<sup>1</sup> To be supplied by the student, as an exercise.

type is small, so one must have good eyes to read it with comfort.

**more than an extravagance**: i.e. he could not afford to buy the book, but he wanted it so much that he went without food in order to save money to buy it; the purchase was therefore more than a luxury, it was a sacrifice.

### §3. His copy of Tibullus and how he bought it

#### KEY-QUESTION

'What made him value his copy of Tibullus?'

#### EXPLANATIONS

**no drawing-room sense of the word**: the word 'sacrifice' used in a 'drawing-room' sense, means just a little sacrifice e.g. when you offer your seat to another person as a mark of courtesy or respect, there is no great loss to you: but when you go without food in order to buy a book, it is a *real* sacrifice.

**Heyne's Tibullus**: Tibullus was a famous Roman poet who lived in the time of Augustus, the first Roman Emperor. He wrote in Latin. Heyne, a German scholar, brought out an edition of his works.

**Goodge Street**: in London, not far from the British Museum.

**old coffee-shops**: the writers of an earlier age (the time of King Charles II) used to meet and discuss literature in the coffee-shops, some of which became famous through this.

**gloated**: feasted my eyes, felt intensely satisfied.

**Perlegi**: (Latin) means 'I purchased.'

**with drops of his blood**: (metaphor) at a great sacrifice.

**An tacitum . . . . . est?**: quotation from Horace, another famous Latin poet. Gissing applies the words of Horace to the gentle-hearted

Tibullus, asking whether he is 'walking silent in the balmy woods, meditating upon whatsoever befits a wise and virtuous man'.

#### §4. The purchase of other precious books

##### KEY-QUESTION

'What sacrifice did he make in order to get his copy of Gibbon, and how did he lose the book at last?'

##### EXPLANATIONS

**the British Museum** : one of the greatest national institutions of England. It contains books, manuscripts, antiquities, works of art, natural history specimens and numberless other objects of interest. A copy of every book published in Great Britain has to be sent to the British Museum, so it is one of the largest libraries in the world.

**self-indulgence** : yielding to temptation

**Jung-Stilling** : a German philosopher of the 18th century.

**Wahrheit und Dichtung** : 'Poetry and Truth', the title of the autobiography of Goethe, the great German poet.

**in funds** : in possession of some money.

**first edition of Gibbon** : see the extract from Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* in Group VIII of this book. The first editions of famous books generally become very costly, because only a few copies were printed when the book was new and unknown.

**the price an absurdity** : nominative absolute; 'the price being an absurdity.'

**quartos** : volumes of large size, about the size of a sheet of foolscap.

**tomes** : volumes.

**avoirdu pois** : weight in lbs. He means that when he had to carry these huge heavy volumes he thought of their weight rather than of their value as literature.

**three times, reckoning the walk for the money:** he made three journeys altogether, one to fetch the money and the other two to carry the books home. The distance from the shop to his house was at least two miles. So he had to walk more than ten miles for the sake of those precious books.

**flaccid:** flabby, tired-out.

**labour-saving expenditure:** spending of money in order to save extra labour (in this case riding in an omnibus to save the labour of walking).

**waftage:** transport, conveyance.

**folio:** the largest size of books, even larger than quarto.

**tombstones:** (metaphor) because the books were old and heavy.

**no market-value:** no ready sale.

**the dignity of the subject:** the subject of Gibbon's history is a great one, the decline and fall of the greatest of ancient empires in the west. The size of the books was also great.

**tuned one's mind:** (metaphor) as a musical instrument is tuned to the right key for a particular song.

## B. APPRECIATION

The style of Gissing has a good deal in common with that of Lamb, to whom he refers at the beginning of this extract. Both were book-lovers, and both had great difficulties to face in life, for Gissing was terribly poor (almost starving sometimes, as this extract shows us), while Lamb had the constant anxiety of having to look after his sister, Mary, who was subject to fits of violent madness. Yet neither of these men, even in the midst of their misfortunes, lost their sympathy for the troubles of others, or became bitter in enduring their own. Rather they made light of their own difficulties, and wrote of them for the entertainment of others. Tenderness and charm characterize the style of both

these writers, and, however hard their struggle might be, they never allowed themselves to write anything less than their very best. Gissing in particular took the greatest pains to write beautifully. His style is conversational, but never careless.

### C. ASSIGNMENTS

1. What made Gissing love his books so much?
2. Write a short essay on 'Virtue is made easy by circumstance'.
3. Is there any book of your own which you hold in particular affection? Explain why you value it.

## KINGS' TREASURIES

### §1

[KEY-QUESTION: *What is the difference between a book of the hour and a book for all time?*]

All books are divisible into two classes, the books of the hour, and the books of all time. Mark this distinction—it is not one of quality only. It is not merely the bad book that does not last, and the good one that does. It is a distinction of species. There are good books for the hour, and good ones for all time; bad books for the hour, and bad ones for all time. I must define the two kinds before I go farther.

The good book of the hour, then,—I do not speak of the bad ones—is simply the useful or pleasant talk of some person whom you cannot otherwise converse with, printed for you. Very useful often, telling you what you need to know; very pleasant often, as a sensible friend's present talk would be. These bright accounts of travels;

good-humoured and witty discussions of questions ; lively or pathetic story-telling in the form of novels ; firm fact-telling, by the real agents concerned in the events of passing history ;—all these books of the hour, multiplying among us as education becomes more general, are a peculiar characteristic and possession of the present age : we ought to be entirely thankful for them, and entirely ashamed of ourselves if we make no good use of them. But we make the worst possible use, if we allow them to usurp the place of true books : for, strictly speaking, they are not books at all, but merely letters or newspapers in good print. Our friends' letters may be delightful, or necessary, to-day : whether worth keeping or not, is to be considered. The newspaper may be entirely proper at breakfast time, but assuredly it is not reading for all day. So, though bound up in a volume, the long letter which gives you so pleasant an account of the inns, and roads, and weather last year at such a place, or which tells you that amusing story, or gives you the real circumstances of such-and-such events, however valuable for occasional reference, may not be, in the real sense of the word, a 'book' at all, nor, in the real sense, to be 'read'. A book is essentially not a talked thing, but a written thing ; written, not with the view of mere communication, but of permanence. The book of talk is printed only because its author cannot speak to thousands of people at once ; if he could, he would—the volume is mere *multiplication* of his voice. You cannot talk to your friend in India ;

if you could, you would ; you write instead : that is mere *conveyance* of voice. But a book is written, not to multiply the voice merely, not to carry it merely, but to preserve it. The author has something to say which he perceives to be true and useful, or helpfully beautiful. So far as he knows, no one has yet said it ; so far as he knows, no one else can say it. He is bound to say it, clearly and melodiously if he may ; clearly, at all events. In the sum of his life he finds this to be the thing, or group of things, manifest to him ;—this the piece of true knowledge or sight, which his share of sunshine and earth has permitted him to seize. He would fain set it down for ever ; engrave it on rock, if he could ; saying, ‘This is the best of me ; for the rest, I ate, and drank, and slept, loved, and hated, like another ; my life was as the vapour, and is not ; but this I saw and knew : this, if anything of mine, is worth your memory.’ That is his ‘writing’ ; it is, in his small human way, and with whatever degree of true inspiration is in him, his inscription, or scripture. That is a ‘Book’.

## §2

[KEY-QUESTION: *What are the qualifications for fitness to enjoy the company of ‘the aristocracy of letters’ ?*]

Perhaps you think no books were ever so written?

But, again, I ask you, do you at all believe in honesty, or at all in kindness? Or do you think

there is never any honesty or benevolence in wise people? None of us, I hope, are so unhappy as to think that. Well, whatever bit of a wise man's work is honestly and benevolently done, that bit is his book, or his piece of art. It is mixed always with evil fragments—ill-done, redundant, affected work. But if you read rightly, you will easily discover the true bits, and those *are* the book.

Now books of this kind have been written in all ages by their greatest men :—by great leaders, great statesmen, and great thinkers. These are all at your choice ; and life is short. You have heard as much before ;—yet have you measured and mapped out this short life and its possibilities? Do you know, if you read this, that you cannot read that,—that what you lose to-day you cannot gain to-morrow? Will you go and gossip with your housemaid, or your stable-boy, when you may talk with queens and kings ; or flatter yourselves that it is with any worthy consciousness of your own claims to respect that you jostle with the common crowd for *entrée* here and audience there, when all the while this eternal court is open to you, with its society wide as the world, multitudinous as its days, the chosen, and the mighty, of every place and time? Into that you may enter always ; in that you may take fellowship and rank according to your wish ; from that, once entered into it, you can never be outcast but by your own fault ; by your aristocracy of companionship there, your own inherent aristocracy will be assuredly tested, and the motives with which you strive to take high place in the society of the



living, measured, as to all the truth and sincerity that are in them, by the place you desire to take in this company of the Dead.

'The place you desire,' and the place you *fit yourself for*, I must also say ; because, observe, this court of the past differs from all living aristocracy in this :—it is open to labour and to merit, but to nothing else. No wealth will bribe, no name overawe, no artifice deceive, the guardian of those Elysian gates. In the deep sense, no vile or vulgar person ever enters there. At the portières of that silent Faubourg St. Germain, there is but brief question, 'Do you deserve to enter? Pass. Do you ask to be the companion of nobles? Make yourself noble, and you shall be. Do you long for the conversation of the wise? Learn to understand it, and you shall hear it. But on other terms? No. If you will not rise to us, we cannot stoop to you. The living lord may assume courtesy, the living philosopher explain his thought to you with considerate pain ; but here we neither feign nor interpret ; you must rise to the level of our thoughts if you would be gladdened by them, and share our feelings, if you would recognize our presence.'

### §3

[KEY-QUESTION: *What are the two things we must do in order to enjoy good books ?*]

This, then, is what you have to do, and I admit that it is much. You must, in a word, love these people, if you are to be among them. No ambi-

tion is of any use. They scorn your ambition. You must love them and show your love in these two following ways.

First, by a true desire to be taught by them, and to enter into their thought. To enter in theirs, observe : not to find your own expressed by them. If the person who wrote the book is not wiser than you, you need not read it ; if he be, he will think differently from you in many respects.

Very ready we are to say of a book, 'How good this is,—that's exactly what I think !' But the right feeling is, 'How strange that is ! I never thought of that before, and yet I see it is true ; or if I do not now, I hope I shall, some day.' But whether thus submissively or not, at least be sure that you go to the author to get at *his* meaning, not to find yours. Judge it afterwards, if you think yourself qualified to do so ; but ascertain it first. And be sure also, if the author is worth anything, that you will not get at his meaning all at once ;—nay, that at his whole meaning you will not for a long time arrive in any wise. Not that he does not say what he means, and in strong words too ; but he cannot say it all ; and what is more strange, will not, but in a hidden way and in parables, in order that he may be sure you want it. I cannot quite see the reason of this, nor analyse that cruel reticence in the breasts of wise men which makes them always hide their deeper thought. They do not give it you by way of help, but of reward, and will make themselves sure that you deserve it before they allow you to

reach it. But it is the same with the physical type of wisdom, gold. There seems, to you and me, no reason why the electric forces of the earth should not carry whatever there is of gold within it at once to the mountain tops, so that kings and people might know that all the gold they could get was there ; and without any trouble of digging, or anxiety, or chance, or waste of time, cut it away, and coin as much as they needed. But Nature does not manage it so. She puts it in little fissures in the earth, nobody knows where : you may dig long and find none ; you must dig painfully to find any.

And it is just the same with men's best wisdom. When you come to a good book, you must ask yourself, 'Am I inclined to work as an Australian miner would? Are my pickaxes and shovels in good order, and am I in good trim myself, my sleeves well up to the elbow, and my breath good, and my temper?' And, keeping the figure a little longer, even at cost of tiresomeness, for it is a thoroughly useful one, the metal you are in search of being the author's mind or meaning, his words are as the rock which you have to crush and smelt in order to get at it. And your pickaxes are your own care, wit, and learning ; your smelting furnace is your own thoughtful soul. Do not hope to get at any good author's meaning without those tools and that fire ; often you will need sharpest, finest chiselling, and patient fusing, before you can gather one grain of the metal.

And, therefore, first of all, I tell you, earnestly and authoritatively (*I know I am right in this*),

you must get into the habit of looking intensely at words, and assuring yourself of their meaning, syllable by syllable—nay, letter by letter. For though it is only by reason of the opposition of letters in the function of signs, to sounds in the function of signs, that the study of books is called 'literature', and that a man versed in it is called by the consent of nations, a man of letters instead of a man of books, or of words, you may yet connect with that accidental nomenclature this real principle :—that you might read all the books in the British Museum (if you could live long enough), and remain an utterly 'illiterate', uneducated person ; but that if you read ten pages of a good book, letter by letter—that is to say, with real accuracy,—you are for evermore in some measure an educated person. The entire difference between education and non-education (as regards the merely intellectual part of it), consists in this accuracy. A well-educated gentleman may not know many languages,—may not be able to speak any but his own,—may have read very few books. But whatever language he knows, he knows precisely ; whatever word he pronounces he pronounces rightly . . . Let the accent of words be watched, by all means, but let their meaning be watched more closely still, and fewer will do the work. A few words well chosen and well distinguished, will do work that a thousand cannot, when every one is acting, equivocally, in the function of another. Yes ; and words, if they are not watched, will do deadly work sometimes . . . .

Having then faithfully listened to the great teachers, that you may enter into their thoughts, you have yet this higher advance to make ;—you have to enter into their hearts. As you go to them first for clear sight, so you must stay with them that you may share at last their just and mighty passion. Passion, or 'sensation'. I am not afraid of the word ; still less of the thing. You have heard many outcries against sensation lately ; but, I can tell you, it is not less sensation we want, but more. The ennobling difference between one man and another,—between one animal and another—is precisely in this, that one feels more than another. If we were sponges, perhaps sensation might not be easily got for us ; if we were earthworms, liable at every instant to be cut in two by the spade, perhaps too much sensation might not be good for us. But being human creatures, it is good for us : nay, we are only human in so far as we are sensitive, and our honour is precisely in proportion to our passion.

JOHN RUSKIN

(From *Sesame and Lilies*)

## NOTES

### INTRODUCTION

This extract is from Ruskin's book *Sesame and Lilies*. Ruskin, a great writer on Art, was fond of giving to his books striking titles, the meaning of which is often hidden under a metaphor, as in the present case. By 'Kings' Treasuries' Ruskin means libraries, which are more valuable to mankind than all the gold in the world, because they are the storehouses of the

wisdom of all the ages. In this extract we learn what Ruskin thought about books. What a difference there is between Ruskin's way of writing about books, and that of Gissing in the extract you have just read! Ruskin originally delivered *Sesame and Lilies* as a series of lectures. The style also shows this

## A. COMPREHENSION

### §1. The two classes of books

#### KEY-QUESTION

'What is the difference between a book "of the hour" and a book "for all time"?'

#### EXPLANATIONS

**very useful often:** the subject, 'The good book of the hour' is understood.

**whether worth keeping or not:** whether they are worth keeping or not.

**The newspaper . . . at breakfast time:** in England the newspapers are generally delivered at the houses in the early morning, so the businessman reads the news while he has his breakfast, before he goes to his office.

**the long letter . . . . . at such a place:** books of travel.

**tells you that amusing story:** novels.

**to be 'read':** i.e. to be read carefully, studied. Compare what Bacon says in the next piece about books which are to be 'chewed and digested'.

**a talked thing:** i.e. of mere passing interest like conversation. Conversation is for the purpose of communication only; writing is for the purpose of recording, and preservation.

**multiplication of his voice:** i.e. to enable him to speak to many people. Of course, this purpose is now served by 'broadcasting' on the radio, which did not exist in Ruskin's time.

**helpfully beautiful:** e.g. poetry.

**clearly at all events:** the *first* essential of good composition is that it should be clear, easily understood by the reader.

**engrave it on rock:** (metaphor) record it permanently.

**my life was as the vapour, and is not:** vapour is seen for a few moments and then disappears; so is a man's life, but if he creates something new, makes a discovery, or a poem, and embodies it in a book, his influence lasts after his life has ended.

## §2. The aristocracy of letters

### KEY-QUESTION

'What are the qualifications required for enjoying the company of "the aristocrats of literature"?'

### EXPLANATIONS

**redundant:** superfluous, unnecessary, useless.

**affected:** insincere.

**if you read this, you cannot read that:** there is no time for reading everything, so we should choose the best.

**Will you go and gossip . . . . . place and time?:** the idea underlying this long metaphor is as follows: Ruskin compares the books written by the great men of all ages to the society of aristocrats, men of high birth and rank: he asks us whether we would choose the company of uneducated people (inferior books) in preference to that of the noblest personages.

**flatter yourselves . . . . . crowd:** are you proud of pushing in the crowd? Do you not think you are worth more respect than that?

**entrée:** right of entry.

**audience:** interview.

**court:** durbar, reception by a sovereign or ruler.

**the chosen, the mighty:** (in apposition to 'its society') the kings and queens of literature, and their admirers and followers.

**by your aristocracy . . . . . of the Dead:** if you desire to take a high place in the aristocracy of letters (i.e. 'if you develop a taste for reading good books'), you prove your own real nobility and the sincerity of your own ambitions.

**it is open to labour and to merit:** you may join this aristocracy by working hard and deserving admission.

**No wealth . . . . . Elysian gates:** you cannot gain admission to the aristocracy of letters by any of the means by which people are generally admitted to the ordinary society of aristocrats, i.e. through wealth and giving great gifts, or because of their high birth, or by trickery. 'Elysium' is the happy place where the souls of good people are supposed to live after death.

**portières:** entrances.

**Faubourg St. Germain:** the part of Paris where the aristocrats used to live. Ruskin calls the aristocracy of literature a 'silent Faubourg St. Germain' because it consists of the books of great men who are dead.

**The living lord may assume courtesy:** in the aristocracy of this world a lord may pretend to be polite to an ignorant man, in order to please him, but no pretence is possible in the aristocracy of literature; if you have not the ability to mix freely in that society (i.e. to understand great books), you cannot be admitted.

### §3. How to enter the court of literature

#### KEY-QUESTION

'What are the two things we must do in order to fit ourselves for the society of great books?'

#### EXPLANATIONS

**I hope I shall some day:** when you read a good book several times, at intervals of a year or two, you find that you understand it better each time;



- you have in the intervals gained additional experience of life, and this helps you to understand points of the author which you could not grasp when you first read the book.

**Judge it:** criticize it.

**in any wise:** in any way.

**parables:** stories which contain a deeper meaning than the obvious one. See the parable of Jesus in Group IX of this book.

**reticence:** reserve, unwillingness to reveal.

**in the breasts:** in the hearts

**by way of rewards:** as a prize, for which you have to work hard.

**physical type of wisdom, gold:** as gold is a precious thing of the material world, and can only be got by digging for it, so is wisdom in the mental world.

**fissures:** cracks

**in good trim:** fit and ready.

**keeping the figure:** continuing the metaphor (figure of speech).

**smelting furnace:** metals are extracted from the ore (rock) in which they are found, by heating the ore intensely in a furnace until the metal melts (smelting) and can thus be poured off in a pure state.

**the opposition of letters . . . . . a man of books:** 'letters in the function of signs' means the letters which signify *sounds* of which words are made; 'sounds in the function of signs' means the *words* which when combined signify *ideas*, and which are expressed in writing as '*literature*'. It is only an accident that instead of saying 'a man of words or of literature', we say 'a man of letters' meaning a man learned or skilled in the use of words, but Ruskin says that even from this accidental use of the word 'letters' instead of 'books' we can extract a significance or meaning, namely, that a man becomes 'literate' or educated not by reading *many* books, but by reading them *carefully*, almost

letter by letter. You must study this passage in that way, or you will not be able to grasp its full meaning.

**fewer will do the work:** if we use words accurately, fewer words will serve to express our meaning.

**equivocally:** with uncertain meaning, doubtfully.

**will do deadly work:** a misunderstanding sometimes leads to serious consequences.

**sensation:** literally means 'feeling'; but it is often used in the sense of 'unhealthy excitement'. Ruskin uses the word in its original sense.

**sponges:** sea-animals which have very little power of feeling; they can be crushed without suffering any injury.

**our honour is precisely in proportion to our passion:** a man should be respected according to the depth of his feelings or sympathy. A 'gentleman' is one who *feels* for others and acts accordingly.

## B. APPRECIATION

Ruskin was, first and foremost, a teacher. He wrote not simply to give pleasure to his readers, but to enlighten and edify them. This object underlies even his writings on Art. How different is his style from that of Gissing! It is clearly the result, partly at least, of the fact that his object was different from that of Gissing. It is instructive to contrast the styles of both of them with that of Bacon, whose essay on the same subject follows this. If Gissing's object was to please, and Ruskin's was to edify, what would you say about Bacon's?

## C. ASSIGNMENTS

1. Give some examples of 'books of the hour' and 'books for all time' that you have read. State the reasons which lead you to put the books into one or other of these classes.

2. What methods of 'multiplication of the voice' have come into use since the time when Ruskin wrote?

3. Explain with reference to the context: 'This I saw and knew: this, if anything of mine, is worth your memory.'

4. Why is the right feeling on reading a book: 'How strange that is! I never thought of that before, and yet I see that it is true; or if I do not now, I hope I shall, some day.'?

5. Do you think that Ruskin's own writing, in this piece, fulfils the requirements of a 'book of all time'? Prove the truth of your answer by quoting from this extract.

## OF STUDIES

### §1

[KEY-QUESTION: *In what ways are studies useful for 'delight', for 'ornament', and for 'ability'?*]

Studies serve for delight, for ornament, and for ability. Their chief use for delight, is in privateness and retiring; for ornament, is in discourse; and for ability, is in the judgment and disposition of business; for expert men can execute, and perhaps judge of particulars, one by one: but the general counsels, and the plots and marshalling of affairs come best from those that are learned. To spend too much time in studies, is sloth: to use them too much for ornament, is affectation; to make judgment wholly by their rules is the humour of a scholar: they perfect nature, and are perfected by experience: for natural abilities are like natural plants, that need pruning by study; and studies themselves do give

forth directions too much at large, except they be bounded in by experience.

## §2

[KEY-QUESTION: *What are the three kinds of books, and why should one study ?*]

Crafty men contemn studies, simple men admire them, and wise men use them : for they teach not their own use ; but that is a wisdom without them and above them, won by observation. Read not to contradict and confute, nor to believe and take for granted, nor to find talk and discourse, but to weigh and consider. Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested ; that is, some books are to be read only in parts ; others to be read but not curiously ; and some few to be read wholly, and with diligence and attention. Some books also may be read by deputy, and extracts made of them by others ; but that would be only in the less important arguments and the meaner sort of books ; else distilled books are, like common distilled waters, flashy things.

## §3

[KEY-QUESTION: *What defects of the mind can be remedied and how ?*]

Reading maketh a full man ; conference a ready man ; and writing an exact man ; and, therefore, if a man write little, he had need have a great memory ; if he confer little, he had need have a present wit ; and if he read little, he had need

have much cunning, to seem to know that he doth not. Histories make men wise ; poets, witty ; the mathematics, subtle ; natural philosophy, deep ; moral, grave ; logic and rhetoric, able to contend :

Abeunt studia in mores ;

nay, there is no stand or impediment in the wit, but may be wrought out by fit studies : like as diseases of the body may have appropriate exercises ; bowling is good for the stone and reins, shooting for the lungs and breast, gentle walking for the stomach, riding for the head and the like ; so if a man's wit be wandering, let him study the mathematics ; for in demonstrations, if his wit be called away never so little, he must begin again ; if his wit be not apt to distinguish or find difference let him study the schoolmen ; for they are 'cymini sectores'. If he be not apt to beat over matters, and to call up one thing to prove and illustrate another, let him study the lawyers' cases : so every defect of the mind may have a special receipt.

FRANCIS BACON  
(From *Essays*)

## NOTES

### INTRODUCTION

Many of the sayings in Bacon's *Essays* have become famous. One's education is not complete if one has not read and re-read at least some of the *Essays*. Bacon was one of the first to advocate the method of experimental science, that is, to build up theories from careful and repeated observations, and being also a great philosopher and a great writer, he made a point of noting

down facts and ideas which struck him, and he then pondered over these and worked them up, sometimes into great scientific treatises, and sometimes into essays in which the maximum of thought is condensed into the minimum of space. Hence to understand the full meaning of what he writes,—particularly in the *Essays*,—one must think over the significance of almost every word. This essay is short, but it is packed with thoughts.

## A. COMPREHENSION

### §1. the three different uses of studies

#### KEY-QUESTION

‘In what way are studies useful for delight, for ornament, and for ability?’

#### EXPLANATIONS

**privateness:** in modern English we say ‘privacy’. Bacon lived in the time of Queen Elizabeth and Shakespeare. Likewise, we now say ‘retirement’ rather than ‘retiring’.

**disposition:** management.

**expert men:** specialists, those who are experts in one thing, rather than men of all-round education.

**particulars:** details.

**counsels:** opinions, advice.

**plots:** plans.

**marshalling:** arranging in proper order.

**expert men . . . learned:** the sense of this passage is that whereas specialists are useful for carrying out schemes and dealing with details, those who have an all-round education are often better qualified to prepare the schemes and give advice, because they can take a ‘bird’s eye view’ of things

**to use . . . affectation:** a man who displays his learning unnecessarily is said to be ‘affected’.

**humour:** whim.

**nature** : natural abilities, or talents.

**studies themselves . . . bounded in by experience** : a scholar tends to be too vague and theoretical unless his theories have been checked and verified by the test of experience.

## §2. Why and how to study

### KEY-QUESTION

‘What is the chief object of studies?’

### EXPLANATIONS

**crafty** : cunning.

**contemn** : despise

**that is a wisdom . . . observation** : when we are studying, we do not always realize the use of study, but we discover that afterwards.

**confute** : contradict or disprove what others say.

**take for granted** : accept without proof.

**weigh and consider** : form careful judgments.

**some books . . . digested** : Note this striking metaphor.

**curiously** : carefully.

**by deputy** : summaries of books made by others.

**distilled . . . flashy things** : just as distilled water looks clear but has no flavour, so summaries of books may seem attractive, but (in the case of books worth reading) have not the same value as the books themselves.

### SECONDARY QUESTION

‘What are the three kinds of books and how should they be read?’

## §3. The effects of study

### KEY-QUESTION

‘What different results are produced by reading, conversation, and writing?’

## SECONDARY QUESTION

'What various defects of the mind can be remedied by what kinds of studies?'

## EXPLANATIONS

**full**: well-informed.

**conference**: conversation.

**ready**: fluent.

**exact**: accurate.

**a present wit**: an alert mind.

**that he doth not**: that which he does not know.

**subtle**: clever at reasoning.

**moral**: moral philosophy.

**'abeunt studia in mores'**: (Latin) 'studies create habits.'

**impediment in the wit**: defect of the mind.

**wrought out**: remedied.

**bowling**: the game of bowls (see page 142).

**stone and reins**: 'reins' = kidneys; 'stone' is a disease of the kidneys.

**shooting**: archery.

**demonstrations**: proving by logical reasoning (as in geometry).

**if his wit be called away**: if his mind wanders.

**schoolmen . . . 'cymini sectores'**: the medieval monastic scholars and theologians (schoolmen) were notorious for quarrelling about petty matters ('cymini sectores' = splitters of hairs, i.e. they disputed about trifling differences).

**beat over matters**: get mastery of details.

**receipt**: prescription or remedy.

## B. APPRECIATION

Bacon's style in his *Essays* is highly compressed; each idea is, as it were, distilled, and we have here the essence. Many of his sayings have become 'household words' because they embody so much thought and wisdom in concentrated form. Bacon, like many of his contemporaries, was fond of preserving a kind of symmetry in his sentences; this is



particularly noticeable in his frequently mentioning things in groups of three (e.g. delight, ornament, ability).

### C. ASSIGNMENTS

1. Write a note comparing Bacon and Ruskin on the reading of books.

2. Bacon is fond of giving three things of each kind. Make a list of such examples from this essay.

3. Find out and explain the following metaphors: pruning; tasting and digesting; distillation; remedies for diseases.

### NOTES ON AUTHORS OF GROUP VI

GEORGE GISSING (1857-1903) had a terribly hard life, and only towards the end of it was he relieved from dire poverty amounting sometimes almost to starvation. Moreover he was by temperament shy and unsuited for the world of everyday affairs. His character and experience are reflected in his books, particularly in the one from which our extract is taken. He was an artist who refused to write anything less than his best, however hard his lot might be.

JOHN RUSKIN (1819-1900) is one of the greatest stylists in English literature, and, like Stevenson, took great pains to write well. Our extract shows how particular he was about the choice of words. He says of his own style: 'Had it not been for constant reading of the Bible, I might probably have taken Johnson for my model of English. To a useful extent I have always done so'. He had a passionate love of Nature and of Art and his earnestness about these finally led him to become a great advocate of social and economic reform. Mahatma Gandhi says that no book ever influenced him as Ruskin's *Unto This Last*, and he has devoted to it the greater part of chapter XVIII of Volume II of his autobiography.

**SIR FRANCIS BACON**, Viscount St. Albans (1561-1626) is the father of the English essay, as well as of modern experimental science. He was one of the greatest scholars, courtiers, and politicians of the Elizabethan Age, and became Lord Chancellor of England. His essays were originally written for his own guidance in private and public affairs. Macaulay says: 'We do not believe that Thucydides himself has anywhere compressed so much thought into so small a space.'

## GROUP VII—ARGUMENT

### A SOCRATIC DIALOGUE

#### §1

[KEY-QUESTION: *What reasons does Crito advance in favour of Socrates' escape, and how does Socrates counter them?*]

*Crito.*—Socrates, I think that you will be doing what is wrong, if you abandon your life when you might preserve it. You are simply playing the game of your enemies; it is exactly the game of those who wanted to destroy you. And what is more, to me you seem to be abandoning your children too: you will leave them to take their chance in life, as far as you are concerned, when you might bring them up and educate them. Most likely their fate will be the usual fate of children who are left orphans. But you ought not to beget children unless you mean to take the trouble of bringing them up and educating them. It seems to me that you are choosing the easy way, and not the way of a good and brave man, as you ought, when you have been talking all your life long of the value that you set upon virtue. For my part, I feel ashamed both for you, and for us who are your friends. Men will think

that the whole of this thing which has happened to you—your appearance in court to take your trial, when you need not have appeared at all ; the very way in which the trial was conducted ; and then lastly this, the crowning absurdity of the whole affair, is due to our cowardice. It will look as if we had shirked the danger out of miserable cowardice ; for we did not save you, and you did not save yourself, when it was quite possible to do so, if we had been good for anything at all. Take care, Socrates, lest these things be not evil only, but also dishonourable to you and to us. Consider then ; or rather the time for consideration is past ; we must resolve ; and there is only one plan possible. Everything must be done to-night. If we delay any longer, we are lost. O Socrates, I implore you not to refuse to listen to me.

*Socrates.*—My dear Crito, if your anxiety to save me be right, it is most valuable : but if it be not right, its greatness makes it all the more dangerous. We must consider then whether we are to do as you say, or not ; for I am still what I always have been, a man who will listen to no voice but the voice of the reasoning which on consideration I find to be truest. I cannot cast aside my former arguments because this misfortune has come to me. They seem to me to be as true as ever they were, and I hold exactly the same ones in honour and esteem as I used to :

and if we have no better reasoning to substitute for them, I certainly shall not agree to your proposal, not even though the power of the multitude should scare us with fresh terrors, as children are scared with hobgoblins, and inflict upon us new fines, and imprisonments and deaths. How then shall we most fitly examine the question? Shall we go back first to what you say about the opinions of men, and ask if we used to be right in thinking that we ought to pay attention to some opinions, and not to others? . . . . Consider then: do you not think it reasonable to say that we should not esteem all the opinions of men, but only some, nor the opinions of all men, but only of some men? What do you think? Is not this true?

*Crito.*—It is.

*Socrates.*—And we should esteem the good opinions and not the worthless ones?

*Crito.*—Yes.

*Socrates.*—But the good opinions are those of the wise, and the worthless ones those of the foolish?

*Crito.*—Of course.

*Socrates.*—And what used we to say about this? Does a man who is in training, and who is in earnest about it, attend to the praise and blame and opinion of all men, or of the one man only who is a doctor or a trainer?

*Crito.*—He attends only to the opinion of the one man.

*Socrates.*—Then he ought to fear the blame and

welcome the praise of this one man, not of the many?

*Crito.*—Clearly.

*Socrates.*—You are right. And, Crito, to be brief, is it not the same in everything? And, therefore, in questions of right and wrong, and of the base and the honourable, and of good and evil, which we are now considering, ought we to follow the opinion of the many and fear that, or the opinion of one man who understands these matters (if we can find him), and feel more shame and fear before him than before all other men? For, if we do not follow him, we shall cripple and maim that part of us which, we used to say, is improved by right and disabled by wrong. Or is this not so?

*Crito.*—No, Socrates, I agree with you.

*Socrates.*—Then, starting from these premises, we have to consider whether it is right or not right for me to try to escape from prison, without the consent of the Athenians. If we find that it is right, we will try : if not, we will let it alone. I am afraid that considerations of expense, and of reputation, and of bringing up my children, of which you talk, Crito, are only the reflections of our friends, the many, who lightly put men to death, and who would, if they could, as lightly bring them to life again, without a thought. But reason, which is our guide, shows us that we can have nothing to consider but the question which I asked just now : namely, shall we be

doing right if we give money and thanks to the men who are to aid me in escaping, and if we ourselves take our respective parts in my escape? Or shall we in truth be doing wrong, if we do all this? And if we find that we should be doing wrong, then we must not take any account either of death, or of any other evil that may be the consequence of remaining quietly here, but only of doing wrong.

*Crito.*—I think that you are right, Socrates.

## §2

[KEY-QUESTION: *What are the arguments of Socrates in favour of obeying the laws?*]

*Socrates.*—Then, my next point, or rather my next question, is this: ought a man to perform his just agreements, or may he shuffle out of them?

*Crito.*—He ought to perform them.

*Socrates.*—Then consider. If I escape without the State's consent, shall I be injuring those whom I ought least to injure, or not? Shall I be abiding by my just agreements or not?

*Crito.*—I cannot answer your question, Socrates. I do not understand it.

*Socrates.*—Consider it in this way. Suppose the laws and the commonwealth were to come and appear to me as I was preparing to run away (if that is the right phrase to describe my escape) and were to ask, 'Tell us, Socrates, what have you in your mind to do?'

What do you mean by trying to escape, but to destroy us, the laws, and the whole city, so far as in you lies? Do you think that a state can exist and not be overthrown in which the decisions of law are of no force and are disregarded and set at nought by private individuals?' How shall we answer questions like that, Crito? Much might be said, especially by an orator, in defence of the law which makes judicial decisions supreme. Shall I reply 'But the State has injured me : it has decided my cause wrongly.' Shall we say that?

*Crito.*—Certainly we will, Socrates.

*Socrates.*—And suppose the laws were to reply, 'Was that our agreement? Or was it that you would submit to whatever judgments the state should pronounce? . . . And do you think that you may retaliate on your country and its laws? If we try to destroy you, because we think it right, will you in return do all that you can to destroy us, the laws, and your country, and say that in so doing you are doing right, you, the man who in truth thinks so much of virtue? Or are you too wise to see that your country is worthier, and more august, and more sacred, and holier, and held in higher honour both by the gods and by all men of understanding, than your father and your mother and all your other ancestors ; and that it is your bounden duty to reverence it, and to submit to it? . . . But if you repay evil with evil, and wrong



with wrong in this shameful way, and break your agreements and covenants with us, and injure those whom you should least injure, yourself and your friends, and your country, and us, and so escape, then we shall be angry with you while you live, and when you die, our brethren, the laws in Hades, will not receive you kindly : for they will know that on earth you did all that you could to destroy us. Listen then to us, and let not Crito persuade you to do as he says.'

Know well, my dear friend Crito, that this is what I seem to hear, as the worshippers of Cybele seem, in their frenzy, to hear the music of flutes : and the sound of these words rings loudly in my ears, and drowns all other words. And I feel sure that if you try to change my mind you will speak in vain ; nevertheless, if you think that you will succeed, say on.

*Crito*.—I can say no more, Socrates.

*Socrates*.—Then let it be, Crito : and let us do as I say, seeing that God so directs us.

(From Plato's *Crito*  
Translated by F. J. Church)

## NOTES

### INTRODUCTION

This passage is, of course, a translation. It is from one of the works of the great Greek philosopher, Plato, the most illustrious pupil of Socrates, who lived during the Golden Age of Athens (the Athens of Pericles), about 100 years after the time of Buddha. Socrates

was perhaps the greatest '*satyagrahi*' that the world has ever known: the search for Truth and the maintenance of the Truth when found was the great passion of his life, and he was put to death because his contemporaries, even in the comparatively enlightened and civilized Athens, found his tireless challenge to thoughtless conventionality and blind orthodoxy too troublesome and dangerous to be endured, mild and non-violent though Socrates always was in his methods. Socrates had a famous way of dealing with his opponents by asking them questions ('examining' them), and gradually leading them on from one answer to another until they committed themselves to some statement which he then proved to them was inconsistent with what they had said before. Or, by a similar process, he made them admit, point by point, the reasonableness of his own arguments, and the falsity of their own beliefs. Proud and conventional people naturally disliked Socrates intensely on this account, and he made many enemies especially among the older and more orthodox, and it was not long before they combined to get rid of him. He was accused of 'corrupting the youth' and of 'teaching people to disbelieve in the gods'. He was tried, according to Athenian custom, before a panel of jurors elected by the citizens, and, as was expected, he was found guilty, and sentenced to death. Owing to the fact that certain festival days happened to fall immediately after the day on which he was sentenced, and on which it was not legal for a prisoner to be put to death, he was kept in prison for some days, and it was during this period that the dialogue here quoted is supposed to have taken place between him and one of his dearest friends and pupils, Crito. Crito urged him to take advantage of the chance to escape from death, by allowing his friends to bribe the jailor to let him escape.

#### A. COMPREHENSION

§1. Crito urges Socrates to escape, on the ground that 'public opinion' will blame his friends for not helping him: Socrates replies to this

## KEY-QUESTION

'What reasons does Crito advance in favour of Socrates' escape, and how does Socrates counter them?'

## EXPLANATIONS

**playing the game of your enemies:** playing into the hands of your enemies, assisting them to kill you, which is what they want to do.

**everything must be done to-night:** the plan was to bribe the jailors and to help Socrates to escape out of the country, during the night.

**its greatness makes it all the more dangerous:** because you love me very much, you are prepared to tempt me to do what is wrong, in order to save my life.

**hobgoblins:** evil spirits.

**a man who is in training:** by means of this simple comparison from everyday life Socrates makes it clear that a wise man does not heed 'public opinion' but only the opinion of the expert, who has carefully considered and studied the matter in hand, and who is likely to know (if anyone does) what is the right course to take. This disposes of Crito's appeal to think of 'what other people will say'. All other considerations, such as expense, reputation, and the fate of his children, are irrelevant, says Socrates.

**§2. Socrates argues that he is bound to keep his oath as a citizen, and to abide by the laws of Athens, even if they condemn him to death**

## KEY-QUESTION

'On what grounds does Socrates argue that he is bound to abide by the laws of the State?'

## EXPLANATIONS

**may he shuffle out of them?:** may he evade them in an underhand, deceitful manner?

**suppose the laws and the commonwealth were to come to me:** Socrates is here personifying the laws, imagining them as speaking to him as if they were persons.

**Do you think that a State . . . private individuals?** Compare this argument with that in 'The Rule of the Road', and the part about 'being good' in 'What is Civilization?', in Group IV.

**judicial decisions supreme:** unless the law is carried out impartially and invariably, peopled lose confidence in it, and the government of the State is weakened.

**shall I reply 'But the State has injured me'?** Notice how Crito welcomes this possibility. But Socrates soon shows him that if we took private vengeance in this way, against the State, there would be hopeless disorder.

**the laws in Hades:** Hades is the Greek name for the next world, the world of departed spirits. Presumably there must be laws in that world also, as in this, so a person who violates the laws in this world is likely to reap the 'karma' of it in the next world also.

**the worshippers of Cybele:** Cybele was supposed to be the spirit or goddess of Nature, and her worshippers used to work themselves up into a frenzy by dancing before her image; when in that condition they imagined that they could hear music and voices unheard by others. Similar forms of 'inspiration' are found in India.

## B. APPRECIATION

The attractiveness of this piece lies chiefly in the calm, clear manner in which Socrates, faced with certain death, convinces his friend Crito that escape, however feasible it might be, is unthinkable for a man who like himself believes that '*right is might*' and that submission to the law, even when it is wrong, is the first duty of a citizen. Here we see not only Socrates' uprightness and courage, as an

individual who would rather die than violate his principles, but also his loyalty as a citizen who would rather suffer at the hands of the law than set an example of lawlessness by trying to evade a penalty constitutionally though none the less cruelly imposed upon him by the majority vote of his fellow-citizens.

### C. ASSIGNMENTS

1. Summarize Socrates' argument against listening to the opinion of the multitude.

2. By what arguments does Socrates convince Crito that he would be wrong in retaliating on the country that had condemned him to death?

3. Do you agree with Socrates that one should always submit to the law, whether it seems to you right or wrong? If not, what is the right thing to do? Consider the consequences to the State, and not only to yourself, when thinking over this question. Illustrate your answer by modern examples, if you can.

## A LETTER TO LORD CHESTERFIELD

### §1

[KEY-QUESTION: *Why did Dr. Johnson visit Lord Chesterfield, and what was the outcome of his visits?*]

'My Lord,

I have been lately informed by the proprietor of *The World*, that two papers, in which my *Dictionary* is recommended to the public, were written by your lordship. To be so distinguished is an honour, which, being very little accustomed to favours from the great, I know not well how to receive, or in what terms to acknowledge.

When, upon some slight encouragement, I first visited your lordship, I was overpowered like the rest of mankind by the enchantment of your address, and could not forbear to wish that I might boast myself *le vainqueur du vainqueur de la terre*—that I might obtain that regard for which I saw the world contending; but I found my attendance so little encouraged, that neither pride nor modesty would suffer me to continue it. When I had once addressed your lordship in public, I had exhausted all the art of pleasing which a retired and uncourtly scholar can possess. I had done all that I could; and no man is pleased to have his all neglected, be it ever so little.

Seven years, my lord, have now passed since I waited in your outward rooms, or was repulsed from your door; during which time I have been pushing on my work through difficulties, of which it is useless to complain, and have brought it at last to the verge of publication, without one act of assistance, one word of encouragement, or one smile of favour. Such treatment I did not expect, for I never had a patron before.

The shepherd in Virgil grew at last acquainted with Love, and found him a native of the rocks.

## §2

[KEY-QUESTION: *Through whose assistance did Johnson become a famous writer?*]

Is not a patron, my lord, one who looks with unconcern on a man struggling for life in the water, and when he has reached ground, encumbers him

with help? The notice which you have been pleased to take of my labours, had it been early, had been kind ; but it has been delayed till I am indifferent, and cannot enjoy it ; till I am solitary, and cannot impart it ; till I am known, and do not want it. I hope it is no very cynical asperity not to confess obligations where no benefit has been received, or to be unwilling that the public should consider me as owing that to a patron which Providence has enabled me to do for myself.

Having carried on my work thus far with so little obligation to any favourer of learning, I shall not be disappointed though I should conclude it, if less be possible, with less : for I have been long wakened from that dream of hope, in which I once boasted myself with so much exultation, my lord,—

Your lordship's most humble, most obedient  
servant,  
Sam. Johnson.'

Dr. SAMUEL JOHNSON  
(*Letter to Lord Chesterfield*)

## NOTES

### INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, if a person writes a book, he usually sends it in manuscript (i.e. handwritten or typewritten, not printed) to a publisher. If the publisher thinks that the book will be bought by a fairly large number of people, he undertakes the cost of printing it, and agrees with the author to pay him a certain sum for the book or to share the profits with him. In the 18th century, however, when Dr. Samuel Johnson began to write, the

method was quite different. In those days, an author generally had to try to find a 'patron', a rich man who would help him to pay for the printing of the book, for printing was very expensive. The patron, being usually a rich man, did not want profits from the book, but he generally expected the author to 'dedicate' the book to him, that is, to print on the first page some complimentary remarks, saying that the book was offered as a gift to him, and in this way advertising the name and fame of the patron.

Dr. Johnson compiled the first effective English Dictionary, but he had no money to publish such a big and costly book. The Earl of Chesterfield was one of the most powerful ministers of that time; he was also a writer; so Johnson hoped to get help from him, and for this purpose frequently went to see him. Chesterfield at first encouraged him, but afterwards took no notice of him. Johnson struggled on amid great difficulties and at last managed to get the great Dictionary published by his own unaided efforts. When the publication of the Dictionary was announced, Chesterfield wrote to a newspaper called *The World* praising Johnson. Johnson took this to mean that Lord Chesterfield wanted people to think that he had been the patron of the Dictionary, and in great indignation he wrote this letter to his Lordship. It is a masterpiece of bitter and sarcastic rebuke, and it did much towards bringing about the end of the system of 'patronage'.

## A. COMPREHENSION

### §1. Johnson states the facts

#### KEY-QUESTION

'Why did Johnson visit Lord Chesterfield and what was the outcome of his visits?'

#### EXPLANATIONS

**to be so distinguished . . . acknowledge :**  
I am not accustomed to receiving favours from



great men, so I do not know how to behave on receiving this favour from you (i.e. the praise of his Dictionary in the newspaper article). Johnson does not really mean this; he says it bitterly.

**the enchantment of your address:** the charm of your manners, your courtesy.

**le vainqueur du vainqueur de la terre:** (French) the conqueror of the world's conqueror, i.e. I wanted to win the help of a man like you, who had won the hearts of everyone

**I had exhausted . . . can possess:** not being a courtier I could not try to win your favour by flattery, etc.

**the shepherd in Virgil:** in one of the 'Eclogues' of the Roman poet Virgil, a shepherd is represented as saying: 'Now I know what Love is; not, as I expected to find him, a being who would sympathize with human passions and feelings, but a savage, a native of the rocks, and deriving his nature from theirs'. Johnson found his patron to be like that too.

## §2. Johnson declares that he owes nothing to any patron

### KEY-QUESTION

'What advantage did Johnson gain from Lord Chesterfield's article in *The World*? Through whose assistance did Johnson become famous as a writer?'

### EXPLANATIONS

**encumbers:** hinders. In using this metaphor, Johnson is referring ironically to the way in which Chesterfield behaved; when Johnson really needed help (like the drowning man) Chesterfield did nothing: when he had achieved his aim (the publication of the Dictionary), Chesterfield began to praise him ('encumbers him with help').

**had it been:** if it had been.

**cannot impart it:** Johnson had lost his wife, so he had no one with whom to share the pleasure of his success.

**cynical asperity:** shameless harshness of manner. If one has received a favour, one ought to acknowledge it: if one has not received any favour, then one need not be ashamed bluntly to say that 'no benefit has been received'.

**wakened from that dream, etc.:** Notice that the concluding part of the letter 'Your lordship's . . . obedient servant' is a part of the last sentence beginning 'I have long wakened'. He means 'I felt proud to consider myself the "humble servant" of so great a patron, but I was wrong in thinking so: it was a false hope such as is experienced in a dream'.

## B. APPRECIATION

This letter is perfect as an example of a dignified and effective protest. Can you not feel how angry and disgusted the writer was when he wrote it? But he never descends to mere rudeness or exaggeration in criticizing his opponent. The attack is unanswerable because it is just. The sarcasm, however bitter, never becomes abusive.

At the time when Dr. Johnson wrote, it was the custom to use long words and heavy constructions, in preference to short simple words and straightforward sentences. The sentence which begins 'When, upon some slight encouragement' shows this to some extent. A heavy involved style of that kind is sometimes called 'Johnsonese', after Dr. Johnson, the greatest writer of his time. But on the whole this letter is free from that heaviness of style, probably because it was written with such intense feeling that the writer 'spoke from his heart' without thinking very much about elaborating what he wanted to say. When you write about something in which you are keenly interested, you will generally find that you write better than usual.

## C. ASSIGNMENTS

1. Find out from your grammar book the meaning of 'irony', if you do not already know it; then find in this passage an example of irony.

2. Why was Dr. Johnson so angry with Lord Chesterfield? Did not Chesterfield help him by writing to *The World* in praise of his Dictionary? Why then did he attack Chesterfield?

3. Mention some of the disadvantages of the system of 'patronage' of authors.

4. Mention several points in this letter which help to show that Johnson had undergone great difficulties and troubles before he became famous.

## ON THE WAR WITH AMERICA

## §1

[KEY-QUESTION: *What three causes of the weakness of the British position are here mentioned by Chatham?*]

I cannot, my Lords, I will not, join in congratulation on misfortune and disgrace. This, my Lords, is a perilous and tremendous moment. It is not a time for adulation; the smoothness of flattery cannot save us in this rugged and awful crisis. It is now necessary to instruct the Throne in the language of truth. We must, if possible, dispel the delusion and darkness which envelop it, and display, in its full danger and genuine colours, the ruin which is brought to our doors.

Can ministers still presume to expect support in their infatuation? Can Parliament be so dead to its dignity and duty as to give its support to measures thus obtruded and forced upon it—

measures, my Lords, which have reduced this late flourishing empire to scorn and contempt? 'But yesterday, and Britain might have stood against the world : now, none so poor as to do her reverence'.

The people whom we at first despised as rebels, but whom we now acknowledge as enemies, are abetted against us—supplied with every military store, have their interest consulted, and their ambassadors entertained—by our inveterate enemy ; and ministers do not, and dare not, interpose with dignity or effect.

The desperate state of our army abroad is in part known. No man more highly esteems and honours the British troops than I do. I know their virtues and their valour. I know they can achieve anything but impossibilities ; and I know that the conquest of British America is an impossibility.

You cannot, my Lords, you cannot conquer America. What is your present situation there? We do not know the worst ; but we do know that in three campaigns we have done nothing, and suffered much. You may swell every expense, accumulate every assistance, and extend your traffic to the shambles of every German despot ; your attempts will be for ever vain and impotent ; doubly so, indeed, from this mercenary aid on which you rely ; for it irritates, to an incurable resentment, the minds of your adversaries, to overrun them with the mercenary sons of rapine and plunder, devoting them and their possessions to the rapacity of hireling cruelty.

If I were an American, as I am an Englishman, while a foreign troop remained in my country I never would lay down my arms ;—never !—never !

## §2

[KEY-QUESTION : *Why was Chatham so shocked at the idea of the Red Indians being allies of the British ?*]

But, my Lords, who is the man that, in addition to the disgraces and mischiefs of the war, has dared to authorize and associate to our arms the *tomahawk* and the *scalping-knife* of the savage?—To call into civilized alliance the wild and inhuman inhabitants of the woods?—To delegate to the merciless Indian the defence of disputed rights, and to wage the horrors of his barbarous war against our brethren? My Lords, these enormities cry aloud for redress and punishment.

But, my Lords, this barbarous measure has been defended, not only on principles of policy and necessity, but also on those of morality ; ‘for it is perfectly allowable,’ says Lord Suffolk, ‘to use all the means which God and nature have put into our hands !’ I am astonished, I am shocked, to hear such principles confessed,—to hear them avowed in this House or in this country.

My Lords, I did not intend to encroach so much on your attention, but I cannot repress my indignation—I feel myself impelled to speak. My Lords, we are called upon, as members of this House, as men, as Christians, to protest against this horrible barbarity. ‘That God and nature

have put into our hands !' What ideas of God and nature that noble Lord may entertain, I know not ; but I know that such detestable principles are equally abhorrent to religion and to humanity.

What ! to attribute the sacred sanction of God and nature to the massacres of the Indian scalping-knife !—to the cannibal savage, torturing, murdering, devouring, drinking the blood of his mangled victims ! Such notions shock every precept of morality, every feeling of humanity, every sentiment of honour. These abominable principles, and this more abominable avowal of them, demand the most decisive indignation.

/ I call upon that right reverend and this most learned bench to vindicate the religion of their God, to support the justice of their country. I call upon the bishops to interpose the unsullied sanctity of their lawn,—upon the judges to interpose the purity of their ermine, to save us from this pollution. I call upon the honour of your Lordships to reverence the dignity of your ancestors, and to maintain your own. I call upon the spirit and humanity of my country to vindicate the national character. I invoke the genius of the constitution. ✓

To send forth the merciless cannibal, thirsting for blood !—against whom ? our brethren !—To lay waste their country, to desolate their dwellings, and extirpate their race and name, by the aid and instrumentality of these horrible hounds of war !

Spain can no longer boast pre-eminence in barbarity. She armed herself with blood-hounds

to extirpate the wretched natives of Mexico ! We, more ruthless, loose these dogs of war against our countrymen in America endeared to us by every tie that can sanctify humanity !

I solemnly call upon your Lordships, and upon every order of men in the State, to stamp upon this infamous procedure the indelible stigma of public abhorrence. More particularly, I call upon the holy prelates of our religion to do away this iniquity : let them perform a lustration, to purify the country from this deep and deadly sin.

My Lords, I am old and weak, and at present, unable to say more ; but my feelings of indignation were too strong to have said less. I could not have slept this night in my bed, nor even reposed my head upon my pillow, without giving vent to my eternal abhorrence of such enormous and preposterous principles.

WILLIAM PITT, FIRST EARL OF CHATHAM

*(Speech in the House of Lords)*

## NOTES

### INTRODUCTION

The circumstances in which Chatham made this famous speech are common knowledge : King George III was making an attempt to recover for the monarchy some of the autocratic power lost under the Stuarts and the early Hanoverian sovereigns ; he found a suitable opportunity in connexion with the dispute which arose over the right of the mother-country to tax the colonies, and, instead of carrying on peaceful negotiations, attempted to coerce the American colonies into submission, using German mercenaries (hired foreign soldiers) and semi-savage Red Indians as allies for the regular British

Troops. The Elder William Pitt, Earl of Chatham, who had been Prime Minister throughout the greater part of the preceding period of war against France, which had resulted in the great overseas extensions of the British power in India and America, hotly opposed war when it was against fellow-countrymen, and waged mainly to assert the monarch's personal will and to enhance his prestige. This speech was delivered in the House of Lords in 1777, and was one of the last that Pitt made, though not the one which actually brought about his death. The British troops had been badly defeated by the colonists, who in 1776 declared themselves independent. In 1783 the British had to agree to recognize their independence. So Chatham was proved to have been right.

#### A. COMPREHENSION

##### §1 The weakness of the British position

###### KEY-QUESTION

'What three causes of the weakness of the British position are mentioned by Chatham?'

###### EXPLANATIONS

**adulation**: flattery. He means that it is of no use to praise the king for carrying on things well, when the truth is that everything has gone wrong.

**the Throne**: i.e. the king. We use the same figure of speech (metonymy, = mentioning the object or instrument as if it were the person who uses it), when we refer to 'the Chair' meaning the Chairman, or 'the Bench', meaning the Judge who sits on it.

**measures thus obtruded**: laws or orders which Parliament was made to accept against the real will of the majority of the people. The king had his own party in Parliament, and by means of these 'king's men' he managed to get his own way. The 'measures' or laws to which Chatham is particularly referring were the laws compelling the colonists to pay taxes to England. When the colonists refused



to obey the laws, and succeeded in their resistance, this naturally 'reduced the empire to scorn and contempt': no one respects a person who gives orders that he cannot enforce (compare the argument of Socrates on this point).

**rebels . . . now . . . enemies:** the British Government at first regarded the disobedient colonists as rebels who must be punished, but when the rebellion had grown to the dimensions of a war, they looked upon them as enemies who had to be struggled with.

**abetted . . . by our inveterate enemy:** the French, against whom the English have so often fought, were helping the rebel colonists in every possible way. Ordinarily such open assistance would have led to war, but the British Government had its hands too full to engage in another war with such a powerful enemy.

**desperate state:** the British troops were fighting under great difficulties, with insufficient supplies and reinforcements owing to the distance and interference with communications by the French navy.

**extend your traffic . . . . German despot:** i.e. buy the help of bloodthirsty hired soldiers from autocratic German kings. One of the things which made George III most unpopular in this struggle was his employment of Germans to fight against the colonists who, in most cases, were of British birth or descent. Chatham uses the word 'shambles' (which means a place where cattle are slaughtered) as a contemptuous reference to German bloodthirstiness and brutality, George III himself being of German descent (a Hanoverian).

## **§2. The wickedness of using the Red Indians as allies of the British**

### **KEY-QUESTION**

'Why was Chatham so shocked at the idea of the Red Indians being British allies? Give at least three reasons.'

## EXPLANATIONS

**tomahawk:** the war-axe of the North American Indians.

**scalping-knife:** the Red Indians used to kill their enemies by 'scalping' them, i.e. by cutting off the skin of the top of the head (scalp), so that they bled to death.

**delegate:** hand over responsibility.

**measure:** act of Parliament.

**cannibal savage . . . . drinking the blood:** this is an exaggeration; the Red Indians were not cannibals.

**that right reverend and this most learned bench:** certain Bishops are *ex officio* members of the House of Lords; their title is 'the Right Reverend'. The House of Lords is also a judicial body, being a court of appeal, and a number of distinguished lawyers are members of it; they are generally addressed as 'most learned'. The 'Bench' literally means the seat on which the members or judges sit, but it has come to mean the people who sit on it, so Chatham here means the group of Bishops and lawyers who are members of the House.

**to interpose the unsullied sanctity of their lawn:** the sleeves of the official dress of a Bishop are made of 'lawn' or fine white linen cloth; because the office of a Bishop is a religious one, his dress is spoken of as if it possessed a special sanctity or holiness: unsullied=pure, undefiled. By this metaphor Chatham means that he wants the Bishops to stand in the way ('interpose their lawn') and check the Government from using the Red Indians as allies, which he regards as a 'pollution' (defilement).

**the purity of their ermine:** the official robes of judges are trimmed with a costly white fur, taken from the animal called 'ermine'. It is also used for the King's coronation robes.

**I invoke the genius of the constitution:** in primitive times men used to perform ceremonies calling.

upon (invoking) spirits (genii) to help them. Chatham uses this metaphor, meaning that he appeals to the laws of the country in support of his argument. Genius here means 'spirit'.

**extirpate**: root out, utterly destroy.

**hounds of war**: men who fight as savagely as dogs.

**Spain . . . . . barbarity**: the Spaniards were notorious for the cruel methods they employed in conquering the Mexicans and Peruvians: Chatham says that it is still worse to use such methods against the colonists.

**to stamp . . . . . abhorrence**: (metaphor) criminals used to be branded (i.e. marked with a hot iron) so that everyone might know them to be criminals; stigma = a mark or stain on the character. Chatham therefore appeals to his hearers to show their disapproval of the action of the Government as clearly as the disapproval (abhorrence) of crime is shown by the branding of a criminal.

**lustration**: a ceremony of purification.

**preposterous**: absurd, misplaced.

## B. APPRECIATION

One could hardly find a more marked contrast to the form of argument used in the 'Socratic dialogue' which precedes this, than this impassioned oration of Chatham's. Socrates makes his appeal entirely to the *reason*: he will not allow himself to be moved even by Crito's affection for him; but Chatham's appeal is almost wholly to the *emotions* of his hearers.

## C. ASSIGNMENTS

1. Mention several features of this passage which indicate clearly that it was a 'fighting speech' made in a great assembly.

2. What different emotions did the speaker aim at stirring up in his hearers? Which portions of

the oration were intended to arouse which emotions?

3. This passage naturally contains a large number of words signifying horror, disgust, anger, etc. Make a list of such words, and in each case compose a sentence of your own, illustrating the correct usage.

4. Imagine yourself as having been in the position of Lord Suffolk, and compose a reply to Chatham's speech.

#### NOTES ON AUTHORS OF GROUP VII

F. J. CHURCH (1854-1888) was the son of R. W. Church, Dean of St. Paul's, London, the friend of Cardinal Newman. He was a scholar of New College, Oxford, and published several translations of classical works. Plato, the Greek philosopher who wrote the account of the Trial and Death of Socrates of part of which our extract is a translation, was a pupil of Socrates. Socrates himself did not leave any writings.

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON (1709-1784) was the literary Dictator of his time. He rose to this position by dint of hard work, for he began life in poor circumstances, the son of a small bookseller, and his first literary work was the writing of miscellaneous articles and translations for the magazines and newspapers which were then coming into vogue. He rose to fame through his poem *The Vanity of Human Wishes*, but it is not as a poet that he will be remembered. His greatest achievement was the compilation of the first effective English Dictionary. He also wrote a series of *Lives of the Poets* and essays on many subjects in his magazines, the *Rambler* and the *Idler*. He exerted a great influence on his literary contemporaries. Gibbon, Burke and Goldsmith were among his close friends, and his biography, written by his friend and admirer, Boswell, is one of the most famous biographies in English literature. ••

**WILLIAM PITT**, the Elder, First Earl of Chatham (1708-1778) was Prime Minister of Great Britain in the critical years of the Seven Years War against the French, and by his conduct of affairs at this time proved himself perhaps the greatest war minister England ever had. As a result of his policy the British were victorious over the French in every sphere of the war, in Europe, Canada, India, and on the sea. Chatham was also one of the greatest parliamentary orators in history.

## GROUP VIII—HISTORY

### SOME POSSIBILITIES OF A FEDERAL WORLD STATE

#### §1

[KEY-QUESTION: *What would be the effect if the whole world could be given peace, order and justice, permanently ?*]

There can be little question that the attainment of a federation of all humanity, together with a sufficient measure of social justice, to ensure health, education and a rough equality of opportunity to most of the children born into the world, would mean such a release and increase of human energy as to open a new phase in human history. The enormous waste caused by military preparation and the mutual annoyance of competing great powers, and the still more enormous waste due to the under-productiveness of great masses of people, either because they are too wealthy for stimulus or too poor for efficiency, would cease. There would be a vast increase in the supply of human necessities, a rise in the standard of life and in what is considered a necessity, a development of transport and every kind of convenience ; and a multitude of people would be transferred from low-grade production to such higher work as art of all kinds, teaching, scientific research, and the like. All over the world there would be

a setting free of human capacity, such as has occurred hitherto only in small places and through precious limited phases of prosperity and security. Unless we are to suppose that spontaneous outbreaks of super-men have occurred in the past, it is reasonable to conclude that the Athens of Pericles, the Florence of the Medicis, Elizabethan England, the great deeds of Asoka, the Tang and Ming periods in art, are but samples of what a whole world of sustained security would yield continuously and cumulatively. Without supposing any change in human quality, but merely its release from the present system of inordinate waste, history justifies this expectation.

We have seen how, since the liberation of human thought in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, a comparatively few curious and intelligent men, chiefly in Western Europe, have produced a vision of the world and a body of science that is now, on the material side, revolutionizing life. Mostly these men have worked against great discouragement, with insufficient funds and small help or support from the mass of mankind. It is impossible to believe that these men were the maximum intellectual harvest of their generation. England alone in the last three centuries must have produced scores of Newtons who never learned to read, hundreds of Daltons, Darwins, Bacons, and Huxleys who died stunted in hovels, or never got a chance of proving their quality.

All the world over, there must have been myriads of potential first-class investigators, splendid artists, creative minds, who never caught

a gleam of inspiration or opportunity for every one of that kind who had left his mark upon the world. In the trenches of the Western front alone during the Great War thousands of potential great men died unfulfilled. But a world with something like a secure international peace, and something like social justice, will fish for capacity with the fine net of universal education, and may expect a yield beyond comparison greater than any yield of able and brilliant men that the world has known hitherto.

## §2

[KEY-QUESTION: *What are the two evil forms of competition that must be abolished and why must they be abolished ?*]

It is such considerations as this, indeed, which justify the concentration of effort in the near future upon the making of a new world state of righteousness out of our present confusions. War is a horrible thing, and constantly more horrible and dreadful, so that unless it is ended it will certainly end human society ; social injustice, and the sight of the limited and cramped human beings it produces, torment the soul, but the strongest incentive to constructive political and social work for an imaginative spirit lies not so much in the mere hope of escaping evils as in the opportunity for great adventures that their suppression will open to our race. We want to get rid of the militarist, not simply because he hurts and kills, but because he is an intolerable •



thick-voiced blockhead who stands hectoring and blustering in our way, to achievement. We want to abolish many extravagances of private ownership just as we should want to abolish some idiot guardian who refused us admission to a studio in which there were fine things to do.

### §3

[KEY-QUESTION: *What three evils might be got rid of, and what would be the result of doing that?*]

There are people who seem to imagine that a world order and one universal law of justice would end human adventure. It would but begin it. But instead of the adventure of the past, the 'romance' of the cinematograph world, the perpetual reiterated harping upon the trite reactions of sex and combat and the hunt for gold, it would be an unending exploration upon the edge of experience. Hitherto a man has been living in a slum, amidst quarrels, revenges, vanities, shames and taints, hot desires and urgent appetites. He has scarcely tasted sweet air yet, and the great freedoms of the world that science has enlarged for him.

To picture to ourselves something of the wider life that world unity would open to men is a very attractive speculation. Life will certainly go with a stronger pulse, it will breathe a deeper breath, because it will have dispelled and conquered a hundred infections of body and mind that now reduce it to invalidism and squalor. We

have already laid stress on the vast elimination of drudgery from human life through the creation of a new race of slaves, the machines. This, and the disappearance of war and the smoothing out of endless restraints and contentions by juster social and economic arrangements, will lift the burthen of toilsome work and routine work, that has been the price of human security since the dawn of the first civilizations, from the shoulders of our children. Which does not mean that they will cease to work, but that they will cease to do irksome work under pressure, and will work freely, planning, making, creating, according to their gifts and instincts. They will fight nature no longer as dull conscripts of the pick and plough, but for a splendid conquest. Only the spiritlessness of our present depression blinds us to the clear intimations of our reason that in the course of a few generations every little country town could become an Athens, every human being could be gentle in breeding and healthy in body and mind, the whole solid earth man's mine and its uttermost regions his playground.

H. G. WELLS

(From *The Outline of History*)

## NOTES

### INTRODUCTION

Experts have calculated that with the help of the present labour-saving machinery and modern scientific appliances, every single person in the whole world could be amply fed, clothed, and provided for in comfort.

by means of no more than three or four hours' work per day on the part of each able-bodied adult, up to the age of 40 years. This means that everyone would be free to engage in whatever harmless activities he or she liked, for the remaining twenty hours of each day, and for the entire remainder of life after 40 years of age! Then why do we not arrange things according to such an agreeable plan? Mr. H. G. Wells, the famous modern novelist, historian and prophet, here tells us some of the obstacles in the way, and how we might overcome them, and what would be the result.

### A. COMPREHENSION

#### §1. The effect of a 'Renaissance' on a world scale

##### KEY-QUESTION

'What would be the effect if the whole world could be given peace, order and justice, instead of these advantages existing only temporarily in a few countries?'

##### SECONDARY QUESTIONS

a. 'What are the three causes of the present "enormous waste"?'

b. 'What samples of "outbreaks of super-men" has the world so far produced?'

##### EXPLANATIONS

**social justice** : i.e. all people to have equal opportunities of happiness, instead of, as now, some being limited from birth by inherited poverty, disease, etc.

**mutual annoyance of competing great powers** : the 'great powers' means the most powerful nations, such as Great Britain, the U.S.A., France, Germany, Italy, Japan, which are rivals for world-power and world-trade.

**too wealthy for stimulus or too poor for efficiency** : if men are too rich, they tend to get

lazy; if they are too poor, they tend to be inefficient because under-nourished.

**transferred from low-grade production:** if the 'low-grade' (menial) work of the world were equally divided, no one would have to spend his entire time over it, and everyone would have much more leisure which could be devoted to higher pursuits such as art, teaching, research, etc.

**Unless . . . . . cumulatively:** The different famous places and persons mentioned in this sentence are examples of what the human race *can* produce when there is a period of peace and prosperity. They are not 'spontaneous outbreaks of super-men', (i.e. merely accidental appearances of exceptional personages in the world), but they are the direct result of men having peace and leisure in which to grow more cultured. So, Wells argues, if we can give peace and leisure to the whole world, then the whole world will produce such great men continuously. You should know something of each place and person mentioned in this and the next paragraph, and you can find that in any good Encyclopædia. Here are only some very brief notes on each:—**The Athens of Pericles:** under the wise rule of Pericles, Greek civilization rose to its highest, and Greek art (particularly sculpture and architecture) to its best, especially in Athens, the capital. **The Florence of the Medicis:** Italy in the Middle Ages was divided into a number of small independent city-states: Florence was one of the chief of these, and became famous for its art (painting, sculpture and architecture) and literature, under the patronage of one of the chief noble families, the Medici. **Elizabethan England:** under the rule of Queen Elizabeth, England not only became mistress of the seas by the defeat of Spain, but produced an extraordinary number of discoverers (Drake, Hawkins) and great writers (Shakespeare, Bacon). **Asoka:** the great Buddhist emperor of nearly all India, under

whose wise rule peace and culture spread not only throughout his own realms, but through whose enthusiasm Buddhist religion and culture was spread into practically all the countries bordering on India. Wells considers Asoka to have been perhaps the greatest ruler the world has ever known, from the point of view of constructive cultural work. **The Tang and Ming periods:** China, under the rule of the Tang emperors (A.D. 618-907) was not only the most powerful nation of Asia, but also the most cultured, for the invention of printing enabled learning to spread, and libraries were extensively established throughout the country. The Ming period (1368-1644) was famous for arts, especially those of painting and pottery.

**Newtons . . . . Huxleys . . . . quality:** Newton, the scientist who formulated the laws of Gravitation as a result of his experiments; **Dalton**, who made important discoveries about the expansion of gases, and who was one of the first to formulate the Atomic theory, as an explanation of the facts of chemical combination. **Darwin**, (see Group II) who did epoch-making work in Biology, and **Huxley** who did much to popularize that work. **Bacon**, was the first to establish the modern method of induction and deduction, i.e. making theories fit facts observed by experiments, and not vice versa. All these men did their work mostly without encouragement, and under very adverse conditions. Had they been even poorer, they might never have become famous at all; so there must have been hundreds like them who lived and died without ever having a chance to develop. If we could improve conditions throughout the world, we could have hundreds of Darwins and Newtons, says Wells. Thousands of them must have been killed in the Great War alone. If we had world-peace and universal education, what a rich harvest, of geniuses the world would produce!

**§2. Why we must have international co-operation****KEY-QUESTION**

'What are the two evil forms of competition that must be abolished, and why?'

**EXPLANATIONS**

**a new world state of righteousness:** 'world' is here used as an adjective, and 'state' means 'condition'.

**the strongest incentive . . . . for an imaginative spirit:** anyone who takes pleasure in thinking what a fine place the world might become if men and nations co-operated, feels impelled to work towards that end, not simply to escape the present evils, but because the future possibilities are so attractive.

**an intolerable thick-voiced blockhead:** people who prefer violence and force to co-operation are like bullies who stand in the middle of the road to progress, shouting rudely (in a coarse, angry voice) at those who want to pass on, and go forward.

**some idiot guardian . . . . to do:** the private ownership of beautiful things (such as works of art and places of enjoyment) which should be open to all, is in the opinion of Wells like the presence of a guard who stops people from going into a place where there are many interesting and useful things to do.

**§3. A picture of human life as it might be****KEY-QUESTION**

'What three evils might be got rid of, and what would be the effect of doing that?'

**EXPLANATIONS**

**there are people . . . . human adventure:** a common argument against Socialism (which is

what Wells believes in) is that if men had no need to compete in order to earn a livelihood, they would grow lazy, and the desire to improve would vanish. Wells replies to this by saying that the spirit of adventure, instead of expressing itself in the excitement of a struggle for wealth, women and power over others (the usual subjects shown in our cinemas), as it does now, would show itself in new inventions, new works of Art, and other forms of creation.

**perpetual reiterated harpings upon the trite reactions of sex :** repeating over and over again the same common stories about love-affairs which are the most common topic of cinematograph shows.

**living in a slum :** Wells compares our present world to the poorest and dirtiest part of a city (slum), in which it is impossible for people to live decently and happily.

**a stronger pulse :** the improvement of human life is here compared to a man improving in health, whose blood circulates more vigorously, and who breathes more deeply, as he gets stronger.

**elimination of drudgery :** by making machines do the menial work.

**smoothing out of endless restraints, etc. :** by better economic arrangements, i.e. by dividing the total wealth of the world more equally, and abolishing poverty, many causes of dispute will be removed, the toilsome and routine work will be more easily done, and there will be more leisure for everyone.

**the price of human security since the dawn of the first civilization :** hitherto, the masses have always been obliged to do menial work for the rich, because, if they did not do so, they were in danger of starving. In the world imagined by Wells, men will *all* do their share of irksome work, with the result that there will be a more equal division of leisure which can be spent in 'planning, making, creating', as he says in the next sentence.

**dull conscripts of the pick and plough:** conscripts are men who are forced to join the Army, whether they like it or not: conscripts of the pick and plough, means men who, in the same way, have to do toilsome work (making roads, and ploughing), by compulsion.

**Only . . . playground:** nowadays, people have become hopeless, because things seem to be in such a muddle, but Wells says that if we planned and determined to change things in the manner he describes above, the whole world would be a different place in less than a hundred years: everyone could be civilized (see note on Athens, above), born from cultured parents and brought up in healthy surroundings, and able to benefit by all the products of the earth (man's mine) and all its delights (man's playground).

## B. APPRECIATION

Mr. Wells is a propagandist rather than a historian. In fact, he has used his pen with great skill in many ways,—first of all as a novelist, and also as a scientist, and here as a historian,—but always with the idea of convincing his readers that human happiness is within reach if only men will plan and co-operate instead of leaving things to chance and fighting each other for the possession of whatever good things there happen to be.

Having this object in view, he writes persuasively, now trying to win you over to his side by his attractive descriptions of the things he desires and sees in his imagined world (e.g. in Section 3 of this piece), now hitting hard at the things he does not like (e.g. the 'intolerable thick-voiced block-head', the militarist), or arguing fiercely and enthusiastically in favour of his own point of view (e.g. the first paragraph of Section 3).

Being essentially a 'modern', Wells often uses words and phrases which are colloquial (e.g. 'some idiot guardian') to sharpen the point of his



arguments and assertions. The structure of his sentences is generally (also in accordance with modern practice) simple, though not necessarily short, and his fame as an exponent of popular science is due largely to his power of putting complicated ideas into clear language.

### C. ASSIGNMENTS

1. What reasons are there for the belief that, if peace and social justice could be established throughout the world, there would be a 'Golden Age' on a scale hitherto undreamt of?

2. What prevented 'scores of Newtons . . . . , hundreds of Daltons, Darwins, Bacons and Huxleys' . . . . from 'proving their quality'?

3. Give at least two examples of striking metaphors from this piece, and explain them.

4. What remedies for the present muddle of world-affairs are advocated by Mr. Wells in this piece?

## THE IMPEACHMENT OF WARREN HASTINGS

### §1

[KEY-QUESTION: *In what ways were the scene and environment of this trial remarkable?*]

The place was worthy of such a trial. It was the great hall of William Rufus, the hall which had resounded with acclamations at the inaugurations of thirty kings, the hall which had witnessed the just sentence of Bacon and the just absolution of Somers, the hall where the eloquence of Grafford had for a moment awed and melted a





*After a drawing by H. Gravelot*

WESTMINSTER HALL

victorious party inflamed with just resentment, the hall where Charles had confronted the High Court of Justice with the placid courage which has half redeemed his fame. Neither military nor civil pomp was wanting. The avenues were lined with grenadiers. The streets were kept clear by cavalry. The peers, robed in gold and ermine, were martialled by the heralds under Garter King-at-arms. The judges in their vestments of state attended to give advice on points of law. Near a hundred and seventy lords, three-fourths of the Upper House as the Upper House then was, walked in solemn order from their usual place of assembly to the tribunal. The grey old walls were hung with scarlet. The long galleries were crowded by an audience such as has rarely excited the fears or the emulation of an orator. There were gathered together, from all parts of a great, free, enlightened and prosperous empire, grace and female loveliness, wit and learning, the representatives of every science, and of every art. . . . There the ambassadors of great kings and commonwealths gazed with admiration on a spectacle which no other country in the world could present. There Siddons, in the prime of her majestic beauty, looked with emotion on a scene surpassing all the imitations of the stage. There the historian of the Roman Empire thought of the days when Cicero pleaded the cause of Sicily against Verres, and when before a senate which still retained some show of freedom, Tacitus thundered against the oppressor of Africa. There were seen, side by side, the greatest painter and

the greatest scholar of the age. The spectacle had allured Reynolds from that easel which has preserved to us the thoughtful foreheads of so many writers and statesmen, and the sweet smiles of so many noble matrons. It had induced Parr to suspend his labours in that dark and profound mind from which he had extracted a vast treasure of erudition, a treasure too often buried in the earth, too often paraded with injudicious and inelegant ostentation, but still precious, massive and splendid.

## §2

[KEY-QUESTION: *What was the appearance of Hastings and how did he behave on this occasion ?*]

The sergeants made proclamation Hastings advanced to the bar, and bent his knee. The culprit was indeed not unworthy of that great presence. He had ruled an extensive and populous country, had made laws and treaties, had sent forth armies, had set up and pulled down princes. And in his high place he had so borne himself, that all had feared him, that most had loved him, and that hatred itself could deny him no title to glory, except virtue. He looked like a great man, and not like a bad man. A person small and emaciated, yet deriving dignity from a carriage which, while it indicated deference to the Court, indicated also habitual self-possession and self-respect, a high and intellectual forehead, a brow pensive, but not gloomy, a mouth of inflexible decision, a face pale and worn, but serene, on which was written, as

legibly as under the picture in the Council-Chamber at Calcutta, *Mens aequa in arduis* ; such was the aspect with which the great proconsul presented himself to his judges. . .

But neither the culprit nor his advocates attracted so much notice as the accusers. In the midst of the blaze of red drapery, a space had been fitted up with green benches and tables for the Commons. The managers, with Burke at their head, appeared in full dress. The collectors of gossip did not fail to remark that even Fox, generally so regardless of his appearance, had paid to the illustrious tribunal the compliment of wearing a wig and sword. Pitt had refused to be one of the conductors of the impeachment ; and his commanding, copious and sonorous eloquence was wanting to that great muster of various talents. Age and blindness had unfitted Lord North for the duties of a public prosecutor ; and his friends were left without the help of his excellent sense, his tact, and his urbanity. But in spite of the absence of these two distinguished members of the Lower House, the box, in which the managers stood contained an array of speakers such as perhaps had not appeared together since the great age of Athenian eloquence. There were Fox and Sheridan, the English Demosthenes and the English Hyperides. There was Burke, ignorant, indeed, or negligent of the art of adapting his reasonings and his style to the capacity and taste of his hearers, but in amplitude of comprehension and richness of imagination superior to every orator, ancient or modern. . . .

## §3

[KEY-QUESTION:<sup>1</sup>]

The charges and the answers of Hastings were first read. The ceremony occupied two whole days, and was rendered less tedious than it would otherwise have been by the silver voice and just emphasis of Cowper, the clerk of the Court, a near relation of the amiable poet. On the third day Burke rose. Four sittings were occupied by his opening speech, which was intended to be a general introduction to all the charges. With an exuberance of thought and a splendour of diction which more than satisfied the highly-raised expectation of the audience, he described the character and institutions of the natives of India, recounted the circumstances in which the Asiatic empire of Britain had originated, and set forth the Constitution of the Company and of the English Presidencies. Having thus attempted to communicate to his hearers an idea of Eastern society, as vivid as that which existed in his own mind, he proceeded to arraign the administration of Hastings as systematically conducted in defiance of morality and public law. The energy and pathos of the great orator extorted expressions of unwonted admiration from the stern and hostile Chancellor, and, for a moment, seemed to pierce even the resolute heart of the defendant. The ladies in the galleries, unaccustomed to such displays of eloquence, excited by the solemnity of the occasion, and perhaps not unwilling to dis-

<sup>1</sup> To be supplied by the student as an exercise.

play their taste and sensibility, were in a state of uncontrollable emotion. Handkerchiefs were pulled out; smelling-bottles were handed round; hysterical sobs and screams were heard: and Mrs. Sheridan was carried out in a fit. At length the orator concluded. Raising his voice till the old arches of Irish oak resounded, 'Therefore,' said he, 'hath it with all confidence been ordered, by the Commons of Great Britain, that I impeach Warren Hastings of high crimes and misdemeanours. I impeach him in the name of the Commons' House of Parliament, whose trust he has betrayed. I impeach him in the name of the English nation, whose ancient honour he has sullied. I impeach him in the name of the people of India, whose rights he has trodden underfoot, and whose country he has turned into a desert. Lastly, in the name of human nature itself, in the name of both sexes, in the name of every age, in the name of every rank, I impeach the common enemy and oppressor of all!'

LORD MACAULAY

(From *Essay on Warren Hastings*)

## NOTES

### INTRODUCTION

If H. G. Wells by his brilliant prophesying has made 'castles in the air' seem like solid realities just in front of us, then Macaulay, by the vividness of his descriptions of past scenes, has brought them to life again. Read this great account of the most famous trial in history right through from beginning to end, before you attempt to study it in detail. Never mind if there are a few unfamiliar words or difficult allusions. In space



of those, you will be able to feel as if you yourself stood as a spectator of that trial, in that ancient, lofty, crowded hall: you will see yourself surrounded by the famous personages of that age: you will hear the impassioned oratory of Burke: you will look upon the dignified yet tragic figure of Warren Hastings, as he stands listening to the charges brought against him. Then imagine how you would have acted, had you been among those who judged him.

#### A. COMPREHENSION

##### §1. The scene of the trial

###### KEY-QUESTION

‘In what ways were the scene and environment of this trial remarkable?’

###### EXPLANATIONS

**the great hall of William Rufus:** Westminster Hall, built by King William I (William Rufus) in the 11th century, still stands, adjoining the present Houses of Parliament in London. It is famous not only because it was used for hundreds of years as the place of coronation of the kings of England (it is not so used now), but also because many famous trials had taken place there, some of which are here mentioned.

**Bacon:** Lord Chancellor under King James I, found guilty of accepting bribes, in 1621 (see his Essay in Group VI).

**Somers:** Lord Chancellor of England, under King William III, was several times accused of corruption, but each time proved himself innocent.

**Strafford:** the right-hand man of King Charles I; to weaken the king's power the Commons impeached him of treason: he defended himself eloquently, but his condemnation was already a foregone conclusion, for the Commons were determined to deprive the king of his vigorous help. He was executed.

**Charles :** King Charles I, who, soon after, was himself tried for his life in the same place, and condemned to death by his own subjects as the enemy of the country of which he had been the king.

**grenadiers :** soldiers who were trained to throw grenades or bombs.

**gold and ermine :** the members of the House of Lords, who are called 'Peers', are entitled to wear gorgeous robes of cloth of gold trimmed with costly fur called 'ermine' (see similar reference in Chatham's speech, in Group VII).

**excited the fears or the emulation of an orator :** to some orators the presence of a vast and distinguished audience would be a cause of nervousness; to others it would be a stimulus to greater effort to achieve fame by making a great speech.

**a spectacle which no other country in the world could present :** England achieved freedom from political tyranny at an earlier date than other countries, and, at the time when Macaulay wrote this, such a trial of a man who had risen to heights of power such as Warren Hastings had, would have been impossible except in England.

**Siddons :** the most famous actress of the time.

**the historian of the Roman Empire :** Gibbon (see the next piece in this Group).

**Cicero pleaded the cause of Sicily against**

**Verres :** as Burke took the leading part in the impeachment of Hastings, so the great Roman orator, Cicero, led the attack on Verres, who was accused of having misgoverned the Roman Province of Sicily.

**Tacitus thundered against the oppressor of Africa :** Africa (in reality only the Mediterranean coast of north Africa) was a Roman Province : Marius Priscus was an oppressive Governor and he was attacked by the senator Tacitus, for misrule.

**the greatest painter :** Sir Joshua Reynolds, the famous painter of portraits.

**the greatest scholar :** Samuel Parr, who was also a famous schoolmaster.

## §2. The accused and the accusers

### KEY-QUESTION

'What was the appearance of Hastings, and how did he behave on this critical occasion?'

### EXPLANATIONS

**carriage :** manner of carrying himself, i.e. posture.

**'mens aequa in arduis' :** (Latin) a mind steady in difficulties.

**managers :** those who managed or took the lead in the impeachment or attack.

**the compliment of wearing a wig and a sword :** Fox was notorious for his carelessness about dress, but on this occasion he had actually put on full dress, which at that time included the wearing of a wig and a sword.

**Athenian eloquence :** Athens, in its best days, was famous not only for its great sculptors and architects, but also for its orators, philosophers and poets. Among the greatest were Demosthenes and Hyperides, to whom Fox and Sheridan are here compared.

## §3. The impeachment

### KEY-QUESTION<sup>1</sup>

### EXPLANATIONS

**the old arches of Irish oak :** the roof of Westminster hall is of wood, brought from Ireland.

<sup>1</sup> To be supplied by the student as an exercise.

**B. APPRECIATION**

Macaulay loved to describe great scenes, and he excelled in making the great moments of the past live again before the eye of imagination. As a searchlight, cast now on to certain figures, groups or significant features of the landscape, reveals them clearly to the spectator, so does Macaulay's pen emphasize point after point, in such sequence that gradually the entire picture is built up in our mind, and we see the whole scene as it was, or, at least as Macaulay wished us to see it. Note the pleasing contrast of short and long sentences,—the short ones used as it were just to point emphatically to something worthy of note, the longer ones (e.g. the second sentence of the piece) building up the impression by adding comment to comment upon the subject. Macaulay's is not a style to be imitated, because it is an extremely difficult style to imitate well.

**C. ASSIGNMENTS**

1. Commit to memory the short passage in Section 2, beginning 'Hastings advanced to the bar' and ending 'presented himself to his judges'. It is worth memorizing.
2. Write notes on the other great impeachments mentioned in this piece.

## THE ROMAN EMPIRE IN THE AGE OF THE ANTONINES

### §I

[KEY-QUESTION: *What was Augustus' policy, and what caused him to adopt it?*]

In the second century of the Christian era, the empire of Rome comprehended the fairest part of the earth, and the most civilized portion of

mankind. The frontiers of that extensive monarchy were guarded by ancient renown and disciplined valour. The gentle, but powerful, influence of laws and manners had gradually cemented the union of the provinces. Their peaceful inhabitants enjoyed and abused the advantages of wealth and luxury. The image of a free constitution was preserved with decent reverence. The Roman senate appeared to possess the sovereign authority, and devolved on the emperors all the executive powers of government. During a happy period of more than four score years, the public administration was conducted by the virtue and abilities of Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian and the two Antonines. It is the design of this and of the two succeeding chapters, to describe the prosperous condition of their empire ; and afterwards, from the death of Marcus Antoninus to deduce the most important circumstances of its decline and fall : a revolution which will ever be remembered, and is still felt by the nations of the earth.

The principal conquests of the Romans were achieved under the republic ; and the emperors, for the most part, were satisfied with preserving those dominions which had been acquired by the policy of the senate, the active emulation of the consuls, and the martial enthusiasm of the people. The seven first centuries were filled with a rapid succession of triumphs ; but it was reserved for Augustus to relinquish the ambitious designs of subduing the whole earth, and to introduce a spirit of moderation into the public councils. Inclined to peace by his temper and situation,

it was easy for him to discover that Rome, in her present exalted situation, had much less to hope than to fear from the chance of arms; and that, in the prosecution of remote wars, the undertaking became every day more difficult, the event more doubtful, and the possession more precarious and less beneficial. The experience of Augustus added weight to these salutary reflections and effectually convinced him that, by the prudent vigour of his counsels, it would be easy to secure every concession which the safety or the dignity of Rome might require from the most formidable barbarians. Instead of exposing his person and his legions to the arrows of the Parthians, he obtained, by an honourable treaty, the restitution of the standards and prisoners which had been taken in the defeat of Crassus.

His generals, in the early part of his reign, attempted the reduction of Ethiopia and Arabia Felix. They marched near a thousand miles to the south of the tropic; but the heat of the climate soon repelled the invaders and protected the unwarlike natives of those sequestered regions. The northern countries of Europe scarcely deserved the expense and labour of conquest. The forests and morasses of Germany were filled with a hardy race of barbarians, who despised life when it was separated from freedom; and though, on the first attack, they seemed to yield to the weight of the Roman power, they soon, by a signal act of despair, regained their independence, and reminded Augustus of the vicissitude of fortune. On the death of that emperor his

testament was publicly read in the senate. He bequeathed, as a valuable legacy to his successors, the advice of confining the empire within those limits which nature seemed to have placed as its permanent bulwarks and boundaries ; on the west the Atlantic Ocean ; the Rhine and Danube on the north ; the Euphrates on the east ; and towards the south the sandy deserts of Arabia and Africa.

Happily for the repose of mankind, the moderate system recommended by the wisdom of Augustus was adopted by the fears and vices of his immediate successors. Engaged in the pursuit of pleasure or in the exercise of tyranny, the first Caesars seldom showed themselves to the armies, or to the provinces ; nor were they disposed to suffer that those triumphs which their indolence neglected should be usurped by the conduct and valour of their lieutenants. The military fame of a subject was considered as an insolent invasion of the imperial prerogative ; and it became the duty, as well as interest, of every Roman general, to guard the frontiers intrusted to his care, without aspiring to conquests which might have proved no less fatal to himself than to the vanquished barbarians.

## §2

[KEY-QUESTION : *What caused Britain to be made an exception in the policy of Augustus ?*]

The only accession which the Roman empire received during the first century of the Christian

era was the province of Britain. In this single instance the successors of Caesar and Augustus were persuaded to follow the example of the former, rather than the precept of the latter. The proximity of its situation to the coast of Gaul seemed to invite their arms; the pleasing, though doubtful intelligence of a pearl fishery attracted their avarice; and as Britain was viewed in the light of a distinct and insulated world, the conquest scarcely formed any exception to the general system of continental measures. After a war of about forty years, undertaken by the most stupid, maintained by the most dissolute, and terminated by the most timid of all the emperors, the far greater part of the island submitted to the Roman yoke. The various tribes of Britons possessed valour without conduct, and the love of freedom without the spirit of union. They took up arms with savage fierceness, they laid them down or turned them against each other with wild inconstancy; and while they fought singly, they were successively subdued. Neither the fortitude of Caractacus, nor the despair of Boadicea, nor the fanaticism of the Druids, could avert the slavery of their country, or resist the steady progress of the Imperial generals, who maintained the national glory, when the throne was disgraced by the weakest or the most vicious of mankind.

EDWARD GIBBON

(From *The Decline and Fall  
of the Roman Empire*)



## NOTES

## INTRODUCTION

This is the opening passage of Gibbon's great work on *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. It describes the policy of the Emperor Augustus, and the single exception to it, the conquest of Britain.

## A. COMPREHENSION

§1. **The extent of the Roman Empire, and the policy of Augustus**

## KEY-QUESTION

'What was Augustus' policy, and what caused him to adopt it and recommend it to his successors?'

## EXPLANATIONS

**The image of a free constitution . . . . . reverence:** in the days of the Republic, Rome was actually ruled by the senate, a more or less representative body. Under the Emperors, i.e. from the time of Augustus onwards, the senate *nomi-nally* controlled affairs; the Emperor was really an absolute monarch, and, as in all autocracies, the country was well or ill-governed according as the Emperor was an able or an incapable man.

**much less to hope than to fear from the chance of arms:** the Roman Empire was already so extensive that there was not much hope of enlarging it further without running the grave risk of sending the armies into remote regions (such as India and northern Europe) where they would be liable to be cut off owing to the lack of easy communications. A world-wide empire was impossible in those days because of the slowness of transport and difficulties of communication.

**Parthians:** inhabitants of the country now called Persia and Mesopotamia. The Roman general Crassus had tried to conquer this country, and had been disastrously defeated.

**Ethiopia:** that portion of Africa now mainly comprised in Abyssinia.

**Arabia Felix:** the southern coastal portion of Arabia.

**Germany:** then inhabited by uncivilized tribes, as was the whole of Europe north of the river Danube and east of the river Rhine. Like the frontier tribesmen of India, they never really submitted to conquest. Hundreds of years had to pass before they became civilised by contact with neighbouring peoples.

**the first Caesars:** 'Caesar' was the family name of the line of emperors who succeeded Julius Caesar. Julius Caesar himself was never actually 'emperor', for the title was first taken by his immediate successor Augustus Caesar, but the name 'Caesar' has come to signify in many languages the 'ruling monarch' (e.g. 'Kaiser', 'Czar', which are different forms of the word 'Caesar').

**invasion of the imperial prerogative:** that is, it came to be regarded as the sole right of the emperor to gain fame by conquering new territories: if any other Roman general attempted to do so, the emperor was likely to regard it as a personal insult, and to reward it not with fame but with death. Such victories might thus prove fatal to the victor.

## §2. The conquest of Britain

### KEY-QUESTION

'What caused Britain to be made an exception to the policy of Augustus, and what assisted the Romans in conquering it without much difficulty?'

### EXPLANATIONS

**the example of the former . . . the precept of the latter:** Julius Caesar was the great conqueror who had enlarged the Roman Empire so extensively: Augustus' precept was not to enlarge it any further, but to consolidate what had already been gained.

**the conquest scarcely formed any exception . . . . . measures:** Gaul (France) was already within the Roman Empire, so crossing the Channel

to conquer a neighbouring island did not seem to be a violation of the policy of Augustus.

**the most stupid . . . :** Claudius.

**the most dissolute :** Nero.

**the most timid :** Hadrian.

**yoke :** as it is the heavy wooden bar that keeps the oxen in subjection at the plough, so the Romans used this as a symbol, and made those whom they conquered 'pass under the yoke' as a mark of their submission to the Roman power.

**Caractacus :** a British chief who fought bravely but unsuccessfully against the Romans.

**Boadicea :** the British queen who led a desperate revolt against Roman rule.

**Druids :** the priestly caste of the Britons, who did their best to keep alive the hostility to Rome.

**the weakest or the most vicious of mankind :** some of the Roman emperors were mere puppets; others were profligates; but for a long period Rome maintained her prestige and power in spite of the many abuses in the imperial and provincial capital cities.

## B. APPRECIATION

Bagehot, a famous English critic, writes of Gibbon's style: 'It is not a style in which you can tell the truth'! He goes on to say: 'a historian who has to tell the truth must be able to tell what is vulgar as well as what is great, what is little as well as what is amazing. Gibbon is at fault here . . . the necessary littlenesses of necessary life are little suited to his sublime narrative.' Gibbon belonged to the age that loved pageantry, the grand and the magnificent, the age that produced Louis the Fourteenth, the '*Grand Monarque*' of France, the builder of the vast palace of Versailles. In literature it is sometimes known as the age of 'diction', when it was considered improper for a writer to 'call a spade a spade': he must dignify it by calling it an 'agricultural implement', if he must mention

such humble tools at all. Contrast Gibbon's references to the decadent Roman emperors with Wells' 'intolerable blockhead' and 'idiot guardian'. Nevertheless, though Gibbon's is not a style to imitate, it can be very impressive when used for its proper purposes. What a stately movement there is in the passage in section 1, beginning 'The principal conquests of the Romans . . .', and how well it suits the subject.

### C. ASSIGNMENTS

1. Explain (not merely the word-meanings but the underlying idea behind) the following: 'The gentle, but powerful, influence of laws and manners had gradually cemented the union of the provinces.' Can you suggest any modern parallel to this?

2. How did it come to pass that in the Roman Empire there was only 'the image of a free constitution'?

3. What was Augustus' 'valuable legacy to his successors'? In what way was it valuable?

4. The system of Augustus was 'adopted by the fears and vices of his immediate successors'. Explain.

### NOTES ON AUTHORS OF GROUP VIII

HERBERT GEORGE WELLS (1866- ). Mr. H. G. Wells' father was a professional cricketer who also kept a small shop. As a boy, Wells was apprenticed to a draper (dealer in cloth), and, later, with the help of scholarships, he took a degree in Science at London University, and became a teacher. After two or three years, however, he gave up teaching for journalism, for, as he himself says: 'Some little kink in my mind had always made the writing of prose very interesting to me.' Wells is intensely interested in modern progress, and he became famous first through short imaginative stories in which he made use of

'the teeming suggestions of modern science'. He wrote his great *Outline of History* because he felt that history taught from a narrow nationalistic point of view was a great danger to world-peace and a hindrance to the growth of internationalism of which he is a most vigorous advocate. He is famous for his imaginative sketches of the probable future, one of which is given in our extract.

THOMAS BABINGTON MACAULAY, BARON MACAULAY (1800-1859) was remarkable for his precocity and prodigious memory. He had a distinguished academic career, became a Member of Parliament, and was for five years Judicial Member of the Supreme Council in India, and on his return to England, he became a Member of the Cabinet. His early writings were mainly contributions to *The Edinburgh Review* and other journals, but he is chiefly famous for his great unfinished *History of England*. His style is brilliant and full of life, though sometimes marred by his desire to make an impression by means of grand phrases or exaggeration. He is too one-sided also, for a real historian. But he made history highly attractive to read.

EDWARD GIBBON (1737-1794) was one of the greatest of the world's historians. In spite of defects of style which were largely those of his age, and which we have already noticed, the great work of Gibbon, his *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, is one of the few books of history which does not get out of date. The English critic, Augustine Birrell, has written of it thus: 'Time has not told upon it. It stands unaltered and with its authority unimpaired. It would be invidious to name the histories it has seen born and die. Its shortcomings have been pointed out—it is well; its inequalities exposed—that is fair; its style criticized—that is just. But it is still read. "Whatever else is read," says Professor Freeman, "Gibbon must be".'

## GROUP IX—RELIGION

### AHIMSA

#### §1

[KEY-QUESTION: *Why is it wrong, according to Mahatma Gandhi, to attack the man who does wrong, though it may be right to attack the wrong-doing ?*]

Man and his deed are two distinct things. Whereas a good deed should call forth approbation, and a wicked deed disapprobation, the doer of the deed, whether good or wicked, always deserves respect or pity as the case may be. 'Hate the sin and not the sinner' is a precept which though easy enough to understand is rarely practised, and that is why the poison of hatred spreads in the world.

This *ahimsa* is the basis of the search for truth. I am realizing every day that the search is vain unless it is founded on *ahimsa* as the basis. It is quite proper to resist and attack a system, but to resist and attack its author is tantamount to resisting and attacking oneself. For we are all tarred with the same brush, and are children of one and the same Creator, and as such the divine powers within us are infinite. To slight a single human being is to slight those divine powers, and thus to harm not only that being but with him the whole world. . . .

## §2

[KEY-QUESTION :<sup>1</sup>]

*Ahimsa* is a comprehensive principle. We are helpless mortals caught in the conflagration of *himsa*. The saying that life lives on 'life' has a deep meaning in it. Man cannot for a moment live without consciously or unconsciously committing outward *himsa*. The very fact of his living—eating, drinking, and moving about,—necessarily involves some *himsa*, destruction of life, be it ever so minute. A votary of *ahimsa* therefore remains true to his faith if the spring of all his actions is compassion, if he shuns to the best of his ability the destruction of the tiniest creature, tries to save it, and thus incessantly strives to be free from the deadly coil of *himsa*. He will be constantly growing in self-restraint and compassion. But he can never become entirely free from outward *himsa*.

Then again, because, underlying *himsa* is the unity of all life, the error of one cannot but affect all, and hence man cannot be wholly free from *himsa*. So long as he continues to be a social being, he cannot but participate in the *himsa* that the very existence of society involves. When two nations are fighting, the duty of a votary of *ahimsa* is to stop the war. He who is not equal to that duty, he who has no power of resisting war, he who is not qualified to resist war, may take part in war, and yet wholeheartedly try to free himself, his nation, and the world from war.

<sup>1</sup> To be supplied by the student as an exercise.

## §3

[KEY-QUESTION: *If Gandhi was against violence, how could he take any part in the War?*]

I had hoped to improve my status and that of my people through the British Empire. Whilst in England I was enjoying the protection of the British Fleet, and taking as I did shelter under its armed might, I was directly participating in its potential violence. Therefore, if I desired to retain my connection with the Empire and to live under its banner, one of three courses was open to me : I could declare open resistance to the war, and in accordance with the law of *Satyagraha*, boycott the Empire until it changed its military policy, or I could seek imprisonment by civil disobedience of such of its laws as were fit to be disobeyed, or I could participate in the war on the side of the Empire and thereby acquire the capacity and fitness for resisting the violence of war. I lacked this capacity and fitness, so I thought there was nothing for it but for me to serve in the war.

I make no distinction, from the point of view of *ahimsa*, between combatants and non-combatants. He who volunteers to serve a band of dacoits, by working as their carrier or their watchman while they are about their business, or their nurse when they are wounded, is as much guilty of dacoity as the dacoits themselves. In the same way those who confine themselves to attending to the wounded in battle cannot be absolved from the guilt of war. . . .



I know that even then I could not carry conviction with all my friends about the correctness of my position. The question is a subtle one. It admits of differences of opinion, and therefore I have submitted my argument as clearly as possible to those who believe in *ahimsa* and who are making serious efforts to practise it in every walk of life. A devotee of truth may not do anything in deference to convention. He must always hold himself open to correction, and whenever he discovers himself to be wrong, he must confess it at all costs and atone for it. . . .

## §4

[KEY-QUESTION: *What are the three steps that lead to a vision of Truth?*]

My uniform experience has convinced me, that there is no other God than Truth. And if every page of these chapters does not proclaim to the reader, that the only means for the realization of Truth is *Ahimsa*, I shall deem all my pains in writing these chapters to have been in vain. And, even though my efforts in this behalf may prove fruitless, let the readers know that the vehicle, not the great principle, is at fault. After all, however sincere my strivings after *Ahimsa* may have been, they have still been imperfect and inadequate. The little fleeting glimpses, therefore, that I have been able to have of Truth can hardly convey an idea of the indescribable lustre of Truth, a million times more intense than that

of the sun we daily see with our eyes. In fact, what I have caught is only the faintest glimmer of that mighty effulgence. But this much I can say with assurance, as a result of all my experiments, that a perfect vision of Truth can only follow a complete realization of *Ahimsa*.

To see the universal and all-pervading spirit of Truth face to face one must be able to love the meanest of creation as oneself. And a man who aspires after that cannot afford to keep out of any field of life. That is why my devotion to Truth has drawn me into the field of politics ; and I can say without the slightest hesitation, and yet in all humility, that those, who say that religion has nothing to do with politics, do not know what religion means.

Identification with everything that lives is impossible without self-purification ; without self-purification the observance of the law of *Ahimsa* must remain an empty dream ; God can never be realized by one who is not pure at heart. Self-purification therefore must mean purification in all the walks of life. And purification being highly infectious, purification of oneself necessarily leads to the purification of one's surroundings.

But the path of self-purification is hard and steep. To attain to perfect purity one has to become absolutely passion-free in thought, speech and action ; to rise above the opposing currents of love and hatred, attachment and repulsion. I know, that I have not in me as yet that triple purity, in spite of constant ceaseless striving for it. That is why the world's praise fails to move me.

indeed it very often stings me. To conquer the subtle passions seems to me to be harder far than the physical conquest of the world by the force of arms. Ever since my return to India I have had experiences of the dormant passions lying hidden within me. The knowledge of them has made me feel humiliated but not defeated. The experiences and experiments have sustained me, and given me great joy. But I know that I have still before me a difficult path to traverse. I must reduce myself to zero. So long as one does not of his own free will put himself last among his fellow-creatures, there is no salvation for him. *Ahimsa* is the farthest limit of humility.

M. K. GANDHI

(From *The Story of My Experiments with Truth*)

## NOTES

### INTRODUCTION

Mahatma Gandhi's views on religion, which he regards as an inseparable part of his life, have probably influenced more people than the religious views of anyone else at present living in the world. Even from this standpoint, therefore, it is the duty of an educated man to know what are his main ideas. He has explained them in the course of relating the story of his life, in his book entitled *The Story of My Experiments with Truth*, from which the preceding extracts were taken.

### A COMPREHENSION

#### §1. Hate the sin and not the sinner

##### KEY-QUESTION

“Why is it wrong, according to Gandhi, to attack

the man who does wrong, though it may be right to attack the wrong-doing?'

## EXPLANATIONS

**Ahimsa**: literally, harmlessness.

**approbation**: approval, praise.

**tantamount**: equivalent.

**tarred with the same brush**: (metaphor) have same marks of imperfection, as tar makes a black mark.

**as such**: as we are such (children of one God).

**slight**: treat with disrespect.

§2. No one can carry out ahimsa perfectly, while living in the world

KEY-QUESTION<sup>1</sup>

## EXPLANATIONS

**comprehensive principle**: a rule of life which includes everything

**conflagration**: (metaphor) fire. The whole world is burning with himsa, and we are in it.

**life lives on life**: all creatures exist by consuming others. Even when we breathe we destroy tiny living things.

**votary**: devotee, one who has taken a vow.

**spring**: (metaphor) source; as water gushes from a spring.

**coil**: (metaphor) like the coil of a snake.

**because underlying . . . . affect all**: all creatures are the same in essence and origin, i.e. from God, so we all share in the sin committed by any other.

§3. Why Gandhi helped the British in the Great War

## KEY-QUESTION

'If Gandhi was against violence, how could he take any part in the War?'

<sup>1</sup> To be supplied by the student as an exercise.

## EXPLANATIONS

**status :** position.

**my people :** the people of India.

**participating . . . . violence :** because I made use of the protection given by the British Navy, I was also a sharer in the guilt of whatever himsa it might commit in the war.

**Satyagraha :** this word is made up of the two words 'satya' (truth), and 'agraha' (firmness), so it means literally 'firmness in holding to the truth'. It has come to mean resistance to what one believes to be wrong by refusal to obey the orders of those who are committing the wrong, and willingness to suffer without resistance whatever penalty may be inflicted for such disobedience. It is also called 'passive resistance' and 'civil disobedience'.

**boycott :** refuse to have anything to do with.

**civil disobedience :** (see under '**Satyagraha**' above.) The difference between satyagraha and civil disobedience is that satyagraha means refusal to obey a *particular* law or order which is believed to be *wrong*, whereas civil disobedience means disobedience to other laws (even good ones) as a protest against the authority that has also made laws or given orders which are held to be bad.

**thereby acquire the capacity and fitness :** i.e. gain a certain position and influence by helping the authorities, and then use that influence of resisting the wrong.

**combatants and non-combatants :** those who actually fight, and those who help in other ways, e.g. as doctors, nurses, engineers, or making and transporting ammunition and food for the soldiers. Here Gandhi is attacking the ideas of those people who want to avoid the actual fighting, but by helping in other ways, do not really oppose war.

**in deference to convention :** because of fear of what other people may say.

**atone :** make amends.

## §4. The way to God

## KEY-QUESTION

'What are the three steps which lead to vision of the Truth?'

## EXPLANATIONS

**these chapters**: the chapters of his book from which this passage is quoted.

**the vehicle**: the one who carries the message, i.e. Gandhi.

**lustre**: brightness.

**all-pervading**: existing everywhere and in everything.

**aspires**: strives.

**identification with everything that lives**: knowing and feeling oneself to be the same in essence as every other creature; intense sympathy; 'yoga'.

**walks of life**: (metaphor) in every direction, in every way.

**infectious**: liable to be transmitted to others.

**triple purity**: freedom from passion in thought, speech and action.

**rise above the opposing currents . . . attachment and repulsion**: this is the same as the teaching of the *Bhagavad Gita*.

**dormant**: sleeping.

## B. APPRECIATION

Mahatma Gandhi's style is typical of the man and his views: it states the facts clearly, as he sees them, without any attempt at unnecessary adornment. He is patient in explaining whatever he feels might cause difficulty to the reader, but he is not verbose. His frankness and sincerity, also, are reflected in his manner of writing. He uses figures of speech, occasionally with great effect, but always to make clearer his meaning, not to

adorn it, as Tagore sometimes does. Each seeks for Truth, but in different ways.

### C. ASSIGNMENTS

1. Explain the meaning of 'Ahimsa' and of 'Satyagraha'.

2. Gandhi says that 'the world's praise . . . very often stings me'. What does he mean by this, and why is it so?

3. What are the three courses of action which, according to Gandhi, are open to a man who wants to resist the carrying on of war? Which of them do *you* consider to be the best, if any?

## THE CREED OF A RATIONALIST

### § I

[**KEY-QUESTION:** *Why did Paine consider it necessary to write about 'morality, humanity, and the theology that is true'?*]

It has been my intention, for several years past, to publish my thoughts upon religion. I am well aware of the difficulties that attend the subject; and from that consideration had reserved it to a more advanced period of life. I intended it to be the last offering I should make to my fellow-citizens of all nations; and that at a time when the purity of the motive that induced me to it could not admit of a question, even by those who might disapprove the work.

The circumstance that has now taken place in France of the total abolition of the whole national order of priesthood, and of everything appertaining to compulsive systems of religion, and

compulsive articles of faith, has not only precipitated my intention, but rendered a work of this kind exceedingly necessary, lest, in the general wreck of superstition, of false systems of government, and false theology, we lose sight of morality, of humanity, and of the theology that is true.

As several of my colleagues, and others of my fellow-citizens of France have given me the example of making their voluntary and individual profession of faith, I also will make mine ; and I do this with all that sincerity and frankness with which the mind of man communicates with itself.

## §2

[KEY-QUESTION: *What does he believe and what does he not believe ?*]

I believe in one God, and no more ; and I hope for happiness beyond this life.

I believe the equality of man ; and I believe that religious duties consist in doing justice, loving mercy, and endeavouring to make our fellow creatures happy.

But lest it should be supposed that I believe many other things in addition to these, I shall, in the progress of this work, declare the things I do not believe, and my reasons for not believing them.

I do not believe in the creed professed by the Jewish church, by the Roman church, by the Greek church, the Turkish church, by the Protestant church, nor by any church that I know of. My own mind is my own church.



All national institutions of churches whether Jewish, Christian, or Turkish, appear to me no other than human inventions set up to terrify and enslave mankind, and monopolize power and profit.

## §3

[KEY-QUESTION: *What are the religious rights of man? What is the essential religious duty of man?*]

I do not mean by this declaration to condemn those who believe otherwise. They have the same rights to their beliefs as I have to mine. But it is necessary to the happiness of man that he be mentally faithful to himself. Infidelity does not consist in believing or disbelieving; it consists in professing to believe what one does not believe.

THOMAS PAINE

(From *The Age of Reason.*)

## NOTES

## INTRODUCTION

Everyone has heard of Edmund Burke, the famous orator who opposed the War against the rebellious American colonists, and who led the attack on Warren Hastings. Thomas Paine was more extreme than Burke: he went to America and took the part of the colonists, and held office in the American army and later in the government of the U.S.A. Then, when Burke wrote against the French Revolution, Paine wrote a reply in support of it, and went to France to help the revolutionaries. Paine was an extremist in another way too. He regarded orthodox religion as an obstacle to

progress, and he wrote his last book, *The Age of Reason*, in support of this view. We have chosen a passage from that book, as representing the point of view of those who think that religion consists 'in doing justice, loving mercy, and endeavouring to make our fellow-creatures happy', to the best of their ability and understanding, rather than in maintaining the beliefs and customs prescribed in holy books or by priests. Paine called such people 'rationalists', meaning thereby that they are guided by their own reason and not by the authority of scriptures or priestly regulations.

## A. COMPREHENSION

### §1. Why Paine wrote on this subject

#### KEY-QUESTION

'Why did Paine consider it necessary to write about "morality, humanity, and the theology that is true"?'

#### EXPLANATIONS

**rationalist**: see the last sentence of the Introduction above.

**purity of motive**: unselfish nature of intention or aim. He means that if he had written about religion when he was young, people might have thought he was being paid to do so, or writing for the sake of fame or notoriety; whereas, by writing about it when he was old and nearing death, nobody could suspect that.

**the circumstance . . . in France**: that is, the French Revolution. The French overthrew not only the monarchy, but also the priesthood, and in their reaction against oppression they went to the opposite extreme for a time, and encouraged every kind of licence, until they found that *some* restrictions are essential for the sake of social order (see the passage on 'What is Civilization?' in Group IV).

**precipitated**: hurried, forced to happen.

**theology**: theories about the nature of God.

· §2. **The beliefs of a rationalist**

**KEY-QUESTION**

'What does he believe, and what does he not believe?'

**EXPLANATIONS**

**profession of faith:** declaration of religious belief.

**church:** established religion.

**Turkish church:** Islam, the Muhammedan religion.

**monopolize:** keep under single control.

§3. **The necessity of tolerance and independence**

**KEY-QUESTION**

'What are the religious rights of man? What is the essential religious duty of man?'

**EXPLANATIONS**

**infidelity:** opposition to religion (not merely lack of belief).

**B. APPRECIATION**

Paine's object is to make his meaning as clear and simple as possible: he makes no attempt at fine writing. The sentences are therefore short and straightforward, except the second paragraph, in which he explains his object

**C. ASSIGNMENTS**

1. In what way was it appropriate for Paine to write 'my fellow-citizens of all nations'?

2. What old ideas did Paine regard as superstitious and harmful, and what ones did he wish to retain?

3. In what ways did he regard established religion as a danger to mankind?

4. What is meant by the following:—(a) 'My own mind is my own church': and (b) 'it is necessary to the happiness of man that he be mentally faithful to himself'.

5. What term is used for 'a person who professes to believe what he does not believe'?

## A PSALM OF DAVID

## §1

[KEY-QUESTION: *What are the qualities of God which the author regards as most wonderful?*]

1. O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me.

2. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off.

3. Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways.

4. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether.

5. Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me.

6. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it.

7. Whither shall I go from thy spirit? Or whither shall I flee from thy presence?

8. If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there.

9. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea;

10. Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.

11. If I say, surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me.

12. Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee.

13. For thou hast possessed my reins : thou hast covered me in my mother's womb.

14. I will praise thee ; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made : marvellous are thy works ; and that my soul knoweth right well.

(From the *Authorized Version of the Old Testament of the Bible*)

## A PARABLE OF JESUS

### §2

[KEY-QUESTION: *What was the lawyer's question and how did Jesus answer him ?*]

Behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tempted Jesus, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life ?

He said unto him, What is written in the law ? how readest thou ?

And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind ; and thy neighbour as thyself.

And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right : this do, and thou shalt live.

But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour ?

And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead.

And by chance there came down a certain priest

that way : and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.

And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side.

But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was : and when he saw him, he had compassion on him.

And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him ; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.

Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves ?

And he said, He that showed mercy on him.

Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.

(From the *Gospel according to St. Luke*,  
*Authorized Version of the Bible*)

## NOTES

### INTRODUCTION

David was the most famous king of Israel (the Jewish nation). He lived about 1000 B.C. when the Aryans were colonizing North India. He was a great religious poet and a musician also, poetry being sung in those days,

as it still is in India. His 'psalms' or religious songs express his devotion to Jehovah, the God of the Jews.

Jesus, the Christ (i.e. the Anointed, or ceremonially destined for a great work) was a Jewish teacher and reformer who lived about the same time as the Kushan kings of India. The orthodox Jews objected to his teachings and persuaded the Roman governor, Pilatus, to put him to death. His followers believe that he came to life again three days after his death, and most Christians worship him as an '*avatar*' or incarnation of God. He taught his followers that they should do good not merely as a formality according to the rules laid down in the Jewish scriptures (the Old Testament), but because all men are brothers, being God's children, and ought therefore to love each other as brothers. Much of his teaching is in the form of parables or simple stories with a moral, such as the one given here. The story of his life and teaching, is told in four different versions known as the *Gospels* of the New Testament, and the lives and teachings of some of his chief disciples are recounted in the remainder of the New Testament books of the Bible. The New Testament (or declaration of God's will) is therefore the chief sacred book of the Christians, as the Old Testament is of the Jews. Both are included in the Bible.

## A. COMPREHENSION

### §1. God knows all and is present everywhere

#### KEY-QUESTION

'What are the qualities of God which the author regards as most wonderful?'

#### EXPLANATIONS

**compassed:** surroundest.

**beset:** enclose, guard.

**wings of the morning . . . the sea:** in Palestine, where David lived, the morning light comes from the land side and the sun appears to sink into the Mediterranean sea in the evening.

**reins**: literally, the kidneys; here it means the inmost parts of the body, internal organs in general.

**right well**: thoroughly.

**Authorized Version**: so called because it is the 'version' or translation which is authorized by the Bishops for use in the churches.

## §2. How to love God and one's neighbour

### KEY-QUESTION

'What was the lawyer's question and how did Jesus answer him?'

### EXPLANATIONS

**tempted Jesus**: the lawyer, like lawyers everywhere, was fond of catching people in argument, and this Jewish lawyer wanted to make Jesus say something that would offend the orthodox Jews and get him into trouble.

**inherit**: receive as my right.

**eternal life**: i.e. after death. The orthodox Jews believe that the soul of man will go to heaven and live for ever, if he has lived according to the Jewish law in this life.

**the Law**: the Jewish law as laid down in the Old Testament

**willing to justify himself**: being anxious to prove himself right.

**Levite**: a priest of the second rank among the Jews.

**Samaritan**: Samaria was a province of Palestine whose inhabitants were people not of pure Jewish descent, but of mixed blood, so the orthodox Jews looked down upon them as inferiors.

**oil and wine**: to heal the wounds.

**Gospel**: literally means 'good news', i.e. the good news about the teaching of Jesus. Luke was one of the followers of Jesus who wrote an account of the 'good news'.



## B. APPRECIATION

Quite apart from its value as a *religious* scripture that has influenced the lives of millions of human beings, the Bible is a great *literary* work which has had a profound effect on the style of many of the greatest writers in the English language, for one of the finest translations of it was made during the Golden Age of English Literature, i.e. in the time of Shakespeare (when James I was king of England, and Akbar was Emperor of Hindustan). The original Bible was not in English, of course, but in two ancient languages,—Hebrew (the language of the Jews who composed the Old Testament, which is their sacred book), and ancient Greek: but the translation in English is perhaps even greater than the originals, as literature. It is essential for anyone who wishes to understand English literature to read at least the most important parts of the English Bible. Our extracts are taken from the finest parts of the Old and the New Testaments respectively, the *Psalms* and the *Gospels*.

## C. ASSIGNMENTS

1. Mention any forms of expression in this piece which are not used in modern English.

2. Why are there numbers before some of the lines in the Psalm, but not in the parable?

3. Mention several striking metaphors from these pieces.

4. How did the lawyer try to get Jesus into trouble through the question he asked, and how did Jesus evade him?

5. What is a parable? In this parable why did Jesus describe the Samaritan as having been the most neighbourly of the three people who passed the wounded traveller?

6. What lesson did Jesus intend to teach by this parable?

## NOTES ON AUTHORS OF GROUP IX

**MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI** (1869- ) is one of the greatest personalities of the world to-day. He was educated at Rajkot, Bhavnagar and London. As a barrister he practised in Bombay, Kathiawar and South Africa. In the formation of his opinions on political and social matters he was considerably influenced by the Russian philosopher and pacifist, Tolstoy, and the English writer, Ruskin. He started and led various Satyagraha, Non-co-operation, and Civil Disobedience movements, in Africa and India, and championed the cause of Indians abroad, notably in South and East Africa, as well as the cause of the poor, the outcaste, and the downtrodden in his own country. He was President of the Indian National Congress in 1925.

**THOMAS PAINE** (1737-1809) was the son of an English farmer. He was at first an excise officer but was dismissed owing to his agitation for the removal of grievances. He went to America and took the side of the revolting colonists in the American War of Independence, and held office under the first American Government. On his return to England in 1787 he wrote his book, *The Rights of Man*, in defence of the French Revolution which was then taking place, and had to flee to France to escape prosecution. He was elected a member of the French Convention. In 1793 he published *The Age of Reason*, a defence of freedom of thought in religion.

*The Authorized Version of the Bible* (1611). This translation of the original Hebrew of the Old Testament and Greek of the New Testament was the result of the Hampton Court Conference which was summoned by King James I in 1604. It was the work of a Committee consisting of the best scholars of the kingdom, and the doing of it occupied about seven years.

## GROUP X—FICTION

### THE BABUS OF NAYANJORE

#### §1

[KEY-QUESTION: *What was Kailas Babu proud of? and what was the young man proud of?*]

Once upon a time the Babus of Nayanjore were famous landlords. They were noted for their princely extravagance. They would tear off the rough border of their Dacca muslin, because it rubbed against their skin. They could spend many thousands of rupees over the wedding of a kitten. On a certain grand occasion it is alleged that in order to turn night into day they lighted numberless lamps and showered silver threads from the sky to imitate sunlight. Those were the days before the flood. The flood came. The line of succession among these old-world Babus, with their lordly habits, could not continue for long. Like a lamp with too many wicks burning, the oil flared away quickly, and the light went out.

Kailas Babu, our neighbour, is the last relic of this extinct magnificence. Before he grew up, his family had very nearly reached its lowest ebb. When his father died, there was one dazzling outburst of funeral extravagance, and then insolvency. The property was sold to liquidate the

debt. What little ready money was left over was altogether insufficient to keep up the past ancestral splendours.

Kailas Babu left Nayanjore and came to Calcutta. His son did not remain long in this world of faded glory. He died, leaving behind him an only daughter.

In Calcutta we are Kailas Babu's neighbours. Curiously enough our own family history is just the opposite to his. My father got his money by his own exertions and prided himself on never spending a penny more than was needed. His clothes were those of a working man, and his hands also. He never had any inclination to earn the title of Babu by extravagant display, and I myself, his only son, owe him gratitude for that. He gave me the very best education, and I was able to make my way in the world. I am not ashamed of the fact that I am a self-made man. Crisp bank-notes in my safe are dearer to me than a long pedigree in an empty family chest.

I believe this was why I disliked seeing Kailas Babu drawing his heavy cheques on the public credit from the bankrupt bank of his ancient Babu reputation. I used to fancy that he looked down on me, because my father had earned money with his own hands.

I ought to have noticed that no one showed any vexation towards Kailas Babu except myself. Indeed it would have been difficult to find an old man who did less harm than he. He was always ready with his kindly little acts of courtesy in time of sorrow and joy. He would join in all

the ceremonies and religious observances of his neighbours. His familiar smile would greet young and old alike. His politeness in asking details about domestic affairs was untiring. The friends who met him in the street were perforce ready to be button-holed, while a long string of questions of this kind followed one another from his lips :

'My dear friend, I am delighted to see you. Are you quite well? How is Shashi? And Dada—is he all right? Do you know, I have only just heard that Madhu's son has got fever. How is he? Have you heard? And Haricharan Babu—I have not seen him for a long time—I hope he is not ill. What's the matter with Rakkhal? And, er-er, how are the ladies of your family?'

Kailas Babu was spotlessly neat in his dress on all occasions, though his supply of clothes was sorely limited. Every day he used to air his shirts and vest and coats and trousers carefully, and put them out in the sun, along with his bed-quilt, his pillow-case, and the small carpet on which he always sat. After airing them he would shake them, and brush them, and put them on the rock. His little bits of furniture made his small room decent, and hinted that there was more in reserve if needed. Very often, for want of a servant, he would shut up his house for a while. Then he would iron out his shirts and linen with his own hands, and do other little menial tasks. After this he would open his door and receive his friends again.

## §2

[KEY-QUESTION : *In what ways did Thakur Dada pretend to have possessions, and why did he do so ?*]

Though Kailas Babu, as I have said, had lost all his landed property, he had still some family heirlooms left. There was a silver cruet for sprinkling scented water, a filigree box for attar-of-roses, a small gold salver, a costly ancient shawl, and the old-fashioned ceremonial dress and ancestral turban. These he had rescued with the greatest difficulty from the moneylenders' clutches. On every suitable occasion he would bring them out in state, and thus try to save the world-famed dignity of the Babus of Nayanjore. At heart the most modest of men, in his daily speech he regarded it as a sacred duty, owed to his rank, to give free play to his family pride. His friends would encourage this trait in his character with kindly good-humour, and it gave them great amusement.

The neighbourhood soon learnt to call him their Thakur Dada. They would flock to his house, and sit with him for hours together. To prevent his incurring any expense, one or other of his friends would bring him tobacco, and say : 'Thakur Dada, this morning some tobacco was sent to me from Gaya, do take it and see how you like it.'

Thakur Dada would take it, and say it was excellent. He would then go on to tell of a certain exquisite tobacco which they once smoked in the

old days at Nayanjore at the cost of a guinea an ounce.

'I wonder,' he used to say, 'I wonder if anyone would like to try it now. I have some left, and can get it at once.'

Everyone knew that, if they asked for it, then somehow or other the key of the cupboard would be missing ; or else Ganesh, his old family servant, had put it away somewhere.

'You never can be sure,' he would add, 'where things go to when servants are about. Now, this Ganesh of mine, I can't tell you what a fool he is, but I haven't the heart to dismiss him.'

Ganesh, for the credit of the family, was quite ready to bear all the blame without a word.

One of the company usually said at this point : 'Never mind, Thakur Dada. Please don't trouble to look for it. This tobacco we're smoking will do quite well. The other would be too strong '

Then Thakur Dada would be relieved and settle down again, and the talk would go on.

When his guests got up to go away, Thakur Dada would accompany them to the door, and say to them on the doorstep : 'Oh, by the way, when are you all coming to dine with me?'

One or other of us would answer : 'Not just yet, Thakur Dada, not just yet. We'll fix a day later.'

'Quite right,' he would answer. 'Quite right. We had much better wait till the rains come. It's too hot now. And a grand rich dinner such as I should want to give you would upset us in weather like this.'

But when the rains did come, everyone was very careful not to remind him of his promise. If the subject was brought up, some friend would suggest gently that it was very inconvenient to get about when the rains were so severe, that it would be much better to wait till they were over. And so the game went on.

His poor lodging was much too small for his position, and we used to condole with him about it. His friends would assure him they quite understood his difficulties : it was next to impossible to get a decent house in Calcutta. Indeed, they had all been looking out for years for a house to suit him, but, I need hardly add, no friend had been foolish enough to find one. Thakur Dada used to say, after a long sigh of resignation : 'Well, well, I suppose I shall have to put up with this house after all.' Then he would add with a genial smile : 'But, you know, I could never bear to be away from my friends. I must be near you. That really compensates for everything.'

### §3

[KEY-QUESTION: *Why was the young man annoyed with Kailas Babu ?*]

Somehow I felt all this very deeply indeed. I suppose the real reason was, that when a man is young stupidity appears to him the worst of crimes. Kailas Babu was not really stupid. In ordinary business matters everyone was ready to consult him. But with regard to Nayanjore his



utterances were certainly void of commonsense. Because, out of assumed affection for him, no one contradicted his impossible statements, he refused to keep them in bounds. When people recounted in his hearing the glorious history of Nayanjore with absurd exaggerations he would accept all they said with utmost gravity and never doubted, even in his dreams, that anyone could disbelieve it.

When I sit down and try to analyse the thoughts and feelings that I had towards Kailas Babu I see that there was a still deeper reason for my dislike. I will not explain.

Though I am the son of a rich man and might have wasted time at college, my industry was such that I took my M.A. degree in Calcutta University when quite young. My moral character was flawless. In addition my outward appearance was so handsome, that if I were to call myself beautiful, it might be thought a mark of self-estimation, but could not be considered an untruth.

There could be no question that among the young men of Bengal I was regarded by parents generally as a very eligible match. I was myself quite clear on the point, and had determined to obtain my full value in the marriage market. When I pictured my choice, I had before my mind's eye a wealthy father's only daughter, extremely beautiful and highly educated. Proposals came pouring into me from far and near; large sums in cash were offered. I weighed these offers with rigid impartiality, in the delicate scales of my own estimation. But there was no one fit

to be my partner. I became convinced, with the poet Bhabavuti, that

In this world's endless time and boundless space  
One may be born at last to match my sovereign  
grace.

But in this puny modern age, and this contracted space of modern Bengal, it was doubtful if the peerless creature existed as yet.

Meanwhile my praises were sung in many tunes and indifferent metres by designing parents.

Whether I was pleased with their daughters or not, this worship which they offered was never unpleasing. I used to regard it as my proper due, because I was so good. We are told that when the gods withhold their boons from mortals they still expect their worshippers to pay them fervent honour, and are angry if it is withheld. I had that divine expectance strongly developed in myself.

I have already mentioned that Thakur Dada had an only grand-daughter. I had seen her many times, but had never mistaken her for beautiful. No thought had ever entered my mind that she would be a possible partner for myself. All the same, it seemed quite certain to me that some day or other Kailas Babu would offer her with all due worship, as an oblation at my shrine. Indeed—this was the secret of my dislike—I was thoroughly annoyed that he had not done it already.

I heard he had told his friends that the Babus of Nayanjore never craved a boon. Even if the girl remained unmarried, he would not break the family tradition. It was this arrogance of his that

made me angry. My indignation smouldered for some time. But I remained perfectly silent, and bore it with the utmost patience, because I was so good.

§4

[KEY-QUESTION: *What was the joke the young man played on Thakur Dada?*]

As lightning accompanies thunder, so in my character a flash of humour was mingled with the mutterings of my wrath. It was, of course, impossible for me to punish the old man merely to give vent to my rage; and for a long time I did nothing at all. But suddenly one day such an amusing plan came into my head, that I could not resist the temptation of carrying it into effect.

I have already said that many of Kailas Babu's friends used to flatter the old man's vanity to the full. One, who was a retired Government servant, had told him that whenever he saw the Chota Lord Sahib he always asked for the latest news about the Babus of Nayanjore, and the Chota Lord had been heard to say that in all Bengal the only really respectable families were those of the Maharaja of Burdwan and the Babus of Nayanjore. When this monstrous falsehood was told to Kailas Babu he was extremely gratified, and often repeated the story. And wherever after that he met the Government servant in company he would ask, along with other questions:

'Oh! er—by the way, how is the Chota Lord Sahib? Quite well, did you say? Ah, yes, I'm

so delighted to hear it ! And the dear Memsahib, is she quite well too ? Ah, yes ! and the little children—are they quite well also ? Ah, yes ! that's very good news ! Be sure and give them my compliments when you see them.' .

Kailas Babu would constantly express his intentions of going some day and paying a visit to the Sahib. But it may be taken for granted that many Chota Lords and Burra Lords also would come and go, and much water would pass down the Hoogly, before the family coach of Nayanjore would be furnished up to pay a visit to Government House.

One day I took Kailas Babu aside, and told him in a whisper : 'Thakur Dada, I was at a levée yesterday, and the Chota Lord happened to mention the Babus of Nayanjore. I told him that Kailas Babu had come to town. Do you know, he was terribly hurt because you hadn't called. He told me he was going to put etiquette on one side, and pay you a private visit himself this very afternoon.'

Anybody else could have seen through this plot of mine in a moment. And, if it had been directed against another person, Kailas Babu would have understood the joke. But after all he had heard from his friend, the Government servant, and after all his own exaggerations, a visit from the Lieutenant-Governor seemed the most natural thing in the world. He became highly nervous and excited at my news. Each detail of the coming visit exercised him greatly—most of all his own ignorance of English. How on earth was that

difficulty to be met? I told him there was no difficulty at all: it was aristocratic not to know English! and, besides, the Lieutenant-Governor always brought an interpreter with him, and he had expressly mentioned that this visit was to be private.

About midday, when most of our neighbours are at work, and the rest are asleep, a carriage and pair stopped before the lodging of Kailas Babu. Two flunkeys in livery came up the steps, and announced in a loud voice, 'The Chota Lord Sahib has arrived.' Kailas Babu was ready, waiting for him, in his old-fashioned ceremonial robes and ancestral turban, and Ganesh was by his side, dressed in his master's best suit of clothes for the occasion. When the Chota Lord Sahib was announced, Kailas Babu ran panting and puffing and trembling to the door and led in a friend of mine, in disguise, with repeated salaams, bowing low at each step, and walking backwards as best he could. He had his old family shawl spread over a hard wooden chair, and he asked the Lord Sahib to be seated. He then made a high-flown speech in Urdu, the ancient court language of the Sahibs, and presented on the golden salver a string of gold mohurs, the last relics of his broken fortune. The old family servant Ganesh, with an expression of awe bordering on terror, stood behind with the scent-sprinkler, drenching the Lord Sahib, touching him gingerly from time to time with the attar-of-roses from the filigree box.

Kailas Babu repeatedly expressed his regret at not being able to receive His Honour Bahadur

with all the ancestral magnificence of his old family estate of Nayanjore. There he could have welcomed him properly with due ceremony. But in Calcutta he was a mere stranger and sojourner—in fact a fish out of water.

My friend, with his tall silk hat on, very gravely nodded. I need hardly say that according to English custom the hat ought to have been removed inside the room, but my friend did not dare to take it off for fear of detection ; and Kailas Babu and his old servant Ganesh were sublimely unconscious of the breach of etiquette.

After a ten minutes' interview, which consisted chiefly of nodding the head, my friend rose to his feet to depart. The two flunkys in livery, as had been planned beforehand, carried off in state the string of gold mohurs, the gold salver, the old ancestral shawl, the silver scent-sprinkler, and the attar-of-roses filigree box ; they placed them ceremoniously in the carriage. Kailas Babu regarded this as the usual habit of Chota Lord Sahibs.

## §5

[KEY-QUESTION : *What unexpected result did the joke have ?*]

I was watching all the while from the next room. My sides were aching with suppressed laughter. When I could hold myself in no longer, I rushed into a further room, suddenly to discover, in a corner, a young girl sobbing as if her heart would break. When she saw my uproarious

laughter she stood upright in passion, flashing the lightning of her big dark eyes in mine, and said with a tear-choked voice : 'Tell me ! What harm has my grandfather done to you ? Why have you come to deceive him ? Why have you come here ? Why—why ?'

She could say no more. She covered her face with her hands, and broke into sobs.

My laughter vanished in a moment. It had never occurred to me that there was anything but a supremely funny joke in this act of mine, and here I discovered that I had given the cruellest pain to this tenderest little heart. All the ugliness of my cruelty rose up to condemn me. I slunk out of the room in silence, like a kicked dog.

Hitherto I had only looked upon Kusum, the grand-daughter of Kailas Babu, as a somewhat worthless commodity in the marriage market, waiting in vain to attract a husband. But now I found, with a shock of surprise, that in the corner of that room a human heart was beating.

## §6

[KEY-QUESTION: *How did the young man try to atone for his cruel joke ?*]

The whole night through I had very little sleep. My mind was in a tumult. On the next day, very early in the morning, I took all those stolen goods back to Kailas Babu's lodging, wishing to hand them over in secret to the servant Ganesh. I waited outside the door, and, not finding anyone, went upstairs to Kailas Babu's room. I heard

from the passage Kusum asking her grandfather in the most winning voice : 'Dada, dearest, do tell me all that the Chota Lord Sahib said to you yesterday. Don't leave out a single word. I'm dying to hear it all over again.'

And Dada needed no encouragement. His face beamed over with pride as he related all manner of praises which the Lord Sahib had been good enough to utter concerning the ancient families of Nayanjore. The girl was seated before him, looking up into his face, and listening with rapt attention. She was determined, out of love for the old man, to play her part to the full.

My heart was deeply touched, and tears came to my eyes. I stood there in silence in the passage, while Thakur Dada finished all his embellishments of the Chota Lord Sahib's wonderful visit. When he left the room at last, I took the stolen goods and laid them at the feet of the girl and came away without a word.

Later in the day I called again to see Kailas Babu himself. According to our ugly modern custom, I had been in the habit of making no greeting at all to this old man when I came into the room. But on this day I made a low bow, and touched his feet. I am convinced the old man thought that the coming of the Chota Lord Sahib to his house was the cause of my new politeness. He was highly gratified by it, and an air of benign severity shone from his eyes. His friends had flocked in, and he had already begun to tell again at full-length the story of the Lieutenant-Governor's visit with still further



adornments of a most fantastic kind. The interview was already becoming an epic, both in quality and in length.

When the other visitors had taken their leave, I made my proposal to the old man in a humble manner. I told him that, 'though I could never for a moment hope to be worthy of marriage connexion with such an illustrious family, yet. . . etc. etc.'

When I made clear my proposal of marriage, the old man embraced me, and broke out in a tumult of joy : 'I am a poor man, and could never have expected such great good fortune.'

That was the first and last time in his life that Kailas Babu confessed to being poor. It was also the first and last time in his life that he forgot, if only for a single moment, the ancestral dignity that belongs to the Babus of Nayanjore.

RABINDRANATH TAGORE

(From *Hungry Stones and Other Stories*)

## NOTES

### INTRODUCTION

Many of Rabindranath Tagore's short stories reflect the life of the Bengal villagers amidst whom he spent a considerable period of his early manhood at the time when he was looking after his father's estates. But he knew the life of the townsfolk too, and the problems that beset those who are hedged about with old customs and conventions while living in the midst of modern conditions. Here we have one of his most delightful stories, full of humour, with a little sly satire here and

there, and over all a tender sympathy for the weak and for those who have fallen on hard days.

*Note.*—The story is written as if it were being told by a prosperous young man of Calcutta. The 'I' in the story must not be taken as meaning Tagore himself.

## A. COMPREHENSION

### §1. Contrast between the two families

#### KEY-QUESTION

'What was Kailas Babu proud of? And what was the young man proud of?'

#### EXPLANATIONS

**the wedding of a kitten:** an example of absurd waste of money.

**before the flood:** (metaphor) before the disaster, the downfall of the old family.

**insolvency:** bankruptcy, inability to pay debts.

**title of Babu:** the term 'Babu' in Bengal is generally applied to educated people of good position.

**pedigree:** a chart showing the names of one's ancestors.

**drawing his heavy cheques . . . Babu reputation:** (a very clever metaphor) Kailas Babu expected people to respect him on account of the past importance of his family, so he is compared to a man who draws cheques on a bank that has no money.

**button-holed:** when one friend meets another on the road, and stands close to him in order to speak intimately, it is called 'button-holing', because one has to come near to a person in order to hold him by the button-hole of his coat.

### §2. Thakur Dada's pretences

#### KEY-QUESTION

- 'In what ways did Thakur Dada pretend to have possessions and why did he do so?'

## EXPLANATIONS

**heirlooms:** precious articles handed down from one's ancestors.

**in state:** in ceremonial fashion.

**Everyone knew. . . . would be missing:** i.e. if, they asked for the tobacco, Thakur Dada would say that it could not be brought just then, because the key of the cupboard had been lost: this was only an excuse for not bringing it, for he really had no such tobacco.

**condole with him:** express sympathy in sorrow with him.

**no friend had been foolish enough to find one:** it would have been foolish to find another house, because Thakur Dada could not afford any other.

## §3. Why the young man disliked Thakur Dada

## KEY-QUESTION

'Why was the young man annoyed with Kailas Babu?'

## EXPLANATIONS

Notice the humour in this section. Tagore describes the young man as disliking the old man for his pride, but he also makes the young man boast of his own importance. This is very true to life; we usually dislike most in others the very faults which we secretly know that we ourselves possess. Analyse your feelings and see if it is not so.

**I weighed these offers . . . estimation:** (metaphor) I considered carefully whether any of the girls offered to me were worthy of marriage with me.

**One may be born:** emphasis on the word 'may', implying doubt

**puny . . . contracted space:** (ironical) there was no girl in the whole of Bengal good enough for this wonderful young man (as he thought).

**my praises were sung:** (metaphor) parents hoping to secure me as a son-in-law praised me in all sorts of ways.

**I used to regard it as my proper due:** and this was exactly the fault which he disliked in Thakur Dada!

**fervent:** ardent, intense.

**that divine expectance:** the same expectation of worship as the gods.

**an oblation at my shrine:** (metaphor) as before, comparing the offering of the girl to him with an offering made to a god.

**craved a boon:** begged a favour.

**smouldered:** (metaphor) burned without flame.

#### §4. The practical joke played on Kailas Babu

##### KEY-QUESTION

'What was the joke the young man played on Thakur Dada?'

##### EXPLANATIONS

**vent:** outlet.

**Chota Lord Sahib:** the Governor of Bengal.

**Burra Lord Sahib:** the Viceroy, who lived in Calcutta as it was then the capital of India.

**much water would pass down the Hoogly:** a pictorial way of expressing the idea that 'a long time would pass'.

**levée:** the Governor's durbar, or reception.

**etiquette:** the rules of conventional and ceremonial behaviour.

**exercised him:** troubled his mind.

**aristocratic:** suitable or belonging to the nobility.

**flunkies:** male attendants.

**walking backward:** because, according to etiquette, one must not turn one's back to a person of very high rank.

**high-flown:** extravagant, using words not generally used in ordinary speech.

**salver:** plate, tray.

**drenching:** completely wetting

**gingerly:** very timidly or carefully.

**a fish out of water :** (metaphor) out of his element.

**tall silk hat :** the black cylindrical hat worn on formal occasions with European 'dress' clothes.

**sublimely :** surpassingly, completely.

### §5. The effect of the joke

#### • KEY-QUESTION

'What unexpected result did the joke have?'

#### EXPLANATIONS

**uproarious :** noisy.

**flashing the lightning of her . . . eyes :** (metaphor) her anger made her eyes flash like lightning in a storm.

**slunk :** went away stealthily (from 'slink').

### §6. Atonement for the joke

#### KEY-QUESTION

'How did the young man try to atone for his cruel joke?'

#### EXPLANATIONS

**to play her part to the full :** Kusum wanted to keep the old gentleman in ignorance of the joke, so she pretended to believe that it was really the Governor who had visited him. If Kailas Babu had found out that it was all a hoax (a joke intended to deceive), his pride would have been terribly wounded.

**benign severity :** kindly rebuke, because he thought it was wrong on the young man's part to have neglected to show respect before, but he forgave him.

**further adornments . . . kind :** with absurd exaggerations.

**an epic :** (metaphor) a poem describing the great deeds of heroes.

## B. APPRECIATION

Tagore excels (as we might expect a poet to do) in the use of apt and striking metaphors. But he

further shows his greatness as an artist by suiting his style to his subject, and not attempting to put a simple story into 'high-flown' language, which would have spoilt it entirely. As a story, too, this is perfect. The character of old Kailas Babu is sketched first with a few masterly strokes, and the picture is filled in by means of the description of incidents such as the closing of his house during his performance of menial work. The satire on the modern young man who thinks himself so much better than the old man is delightful, and there is intense pathos in the brief but effective description of the effect of the joke on the tender-hearted girl. This is a perfect model of how to write a perfect story.

### C. ASSIGNMENTS

1. Explain clearly the significance of (a) 'It was the first and last time in his life that he forgot . . . the ancestral dignity of . . . Nayanjore.' (b) 'The interview was already becoming an epic, both in quality and length.' (c) 'I had that divine expectation strongly developed in myself.'

2. Write a character-sketch of Kailas Babu.

## QUALITY

### §1

[KEY-QUESTION: *What signs were there that Mr. Gessler was a man 'secretly possessed of the Ideal'?*]

I knew him from the days of my extreme youth, because he made my father's boots; inhabiting with his elder brother two little shops let into one, in a small by-street—now no more—but then most fashionably placed in the West End.

That tenement had a certain quiet distinction; there was no sign upon its face that he made for

any of the Royal Family—merely his own German name of Gessler Brothers; and in the window a few pairs of boots. I remember that it always troubled me to account for those unvarying boots in the window, for he made only what was ordered, reaching nothing down, and it seemed so inconceivable that what he made could ever have failed to fit. Had he bought them to put there? That, too, seemed inconceivable. He would never have tolerated in his house leather on which he had not worked himself. Besides, they were too beautiful—the pair of pumps, so inexpressibly slim; the patent leathers with cloth tops, making water come into one's mouth; the tall brown riding boots with marvellous sooty glow, as if, though new, they had been worn a hundred years. Those pairs could only have been made by one who saw before him the Soul of Boot—so truly were they prototypes incarnating the very spirit of all foot-gear. These thoughts, of course, came to me later, though even when I was promoted to him, at the age of perhaps fourteen, some inkling haunted me of the dignity of himself and brother. For to make boots—such boots as he made—seemed to me then, and still seems to me, mysterious and wonderful.

I remember well my shy remark, one day, while stretching out to him my youthful foot:

'Isn't it awfully hard to do, Mr. Gessler?'

And his answer, given with a sudden smile from out of the sardonic redness of his beard: 'Id is an ardt!'

Himself, he was as little as if made from

leather, with his yellow crinkly face, and crinkly reddish hair and beard, and neat folds slanting down his cheeks to the corners of his mouth, and his guttural and one-toned voice; for leather is sardonic substance, and stiff and slow of purpose. And that was the character of his face, save that his eyes, which were grey-blue, had in them the simple gravity of one secretly possessed of the Ideal. His elder brother was so very like him—though watery, paler in every way, with a great industry—that sometimes in early days I was not quite sure of him until the interview was over. Then I knew that it was he, if the words, 'I'll ask my brudder,' had not been spoken; and that, if they had, it was his elder brother.

## §2

[KEY-QUESTION: *What was remarkable about Mr. Gessler's boots and the way he made them?*]

When one grew old and wild and ran up bills, one somehow never ran them up with Gessler Brothers. It would not have seemed becoming to go in there and stretch out one's foot to that blue iron-spectacled glance, owing him for more than—say—two pairs, just the comfortable reassurance that one was still his client. For it was not possible to go to him very often—his boots lasted terribly, having something beyond the temporary—some, as it were, essence of boot stitched into them.

One went in, not as into most shops, in the mood of: 'Please serve me, and let me go!' but restfully,



as one enters a church ; and, sitting on the single wooden chair, waited—for there was never anybody there. Soon, over the top edge of that sort of well—rather dark, as smelling soothingly of leather—which formed the shop, there would be seen his face or that of his elder brother, peering down. A guttural sound, and the tip-tap of bast slippers beating the narrow wooden stairs, and he would stand before one without coat, a little bent, in leather apron, with sleeves turned back, blinking—as if awakened from some dream of boots, or like an owl surprised in daylight and annoyed at his interruption.

And I would say : ‘How do you do, Mr. Gessler? Would you make me a pair of Russia leather boots?’

Without a word he would leave me, retiring whence he came, or into the other portion of the shop, and I would continue to rest in the wooden chair, inhaling the incense of his trade. Soon he would come back, holding in his thin, veined hand a piece of gold-brown leather. With eyes fixed on it, he would remark : ‘What a beautiful biece !’ When I, too, had admired it, he would speak again : ‘When do you wand dem?’ And I would answer : ‘Oh ! As soon as you conveniently can.’ And he would say : ‘To-morrow fortnight?’ Or if he were his elder brother : ‘I’ll ask my brudder !’

Then I would murmur : ‘Thank you ! Good morning, Mr. Gessler.’ ‘Goot morning !’ he would reply, still looking at the leather in his hand. And as I moved to the door, I would hear the tip-tap of his bast slippers restoring him, up

the stairs, to his dream of boots. But if it were some new kind of foot-gear that he had not yet made me, then indeed he would observe ceremony—divesting me of my boot and holding it long in his hand, looking at it with eyes at once critical and loving, as if recalling the glow with which he had created it, and rebuking the way in which one had disorganized this masterpiece. Then, placing my foot on a thin piece of paper, he would two or three times tickle the outer edges with a pencil and pass his nervous fingers over my toes, feeling himself into the heart of my requirements.

I cannot forget that day on which I had occasion to say to him : 'Mr. Gessler, that last pair of town walking-boots creaked, you know.'

He looked at me for a time without replying, as if expecting me to withdraw or qualify the statement, then said :

'It shouldn't 'ave greaked.'

'It did, I am afraid.'

'You goddem wed before dey found demselves?'

'I don't think so.'

At that he lowered his eyes as if hunting for memory of those boots, and I felt sorry I had mentioned this grave thing.

'Zend dem back !' he said ; 'I will look at dem.'

A feeling of compassion for my creaking boots surged up in me, so well could I imagine the sorrowful long curiosity of regard which he would bend on them:

'Zome boods,' he said slowly, 'are bad from birdt. If I can do noding wid dem, I dake dem off your bill.'

Once (once only) I went absent-mindedly into his shop in a pair of boots bought in an emergency at some large firm's. He took my order without showing me any leather, and I could feel his eyes penetrating the inferior integument of my foot.

At last he said :

'Dose are nod my boods.'

The tone was not one of anger, nor of sorrow, not even of contempt, but there was in it something quiet that froze the blood. He put his hand down and pressed a finger on the place where the left boot, endeavouring to be fashionable, was not quite comfortable.

'Id 'urds you dere,' he said. 'Dese big virms 'ave no self-respect. Drash !' And then as if something had given way within him, he spoke long and bitterly. It was the only time I ever heard him discuss the conditions and hardships of the trade.

'Dey ged id all,' he said, 'dey ged id by advertisement nod by work. Dey dake id away from us, who lofe our boods. Id gomes to this—bresently I haf no work. Every year id gets less—you will see.' And looking at his lined face I saw things I had never noticed before, bitter things and bitter struggle—and what a lot of grey hairs there seemed suddenly in his red beard !

As best I could, I explained the circumstances of the purchase of those ill-omened boots. But his face and voice made so deep impression that during the next few minutes I ordered many pairs. Nemesis fell ! They lasted more terribly than

ever. And I was not able conscientiously to go to him for nearly two years.

## §3

[KEY-QUESTION :<sup>1</sup>]

When at last I went I was surprised to find that outside one of the two little windows of his shop another name was painted, also that of a bootmaker—making of course, for the Royal Family. The old familiar boots, no longer in dignified isolation, were huddled in the single window. Inside, the now contracted well of the one little shop was more scented and darker than ever. And it was longer than usual, too, before a face peered down and the tip-tap of the bast slippers began. At last he stood before me, and, gazing through those rusty iron spectacles, said : 'Mr.—, isn'd id?'

'Ah! Mr. Gessler,' I stammered, 'but your boots are really too good, you know! See, these are quite decent still!' And I stretched out to him my foot. He looked at it.

'Yes,' he said, 'people do nod wand good boods, id seems.'

To get away from his reproachful eyes and voice I hastily remarked : 'What have you done to your shop?'

He answered quietly . 'Id was too exbensive. Do you wand some boods?'

I ordered three pairs, though I wanted only two, and quickly left. I had, I do not know

<sup>1</sup> To be supplied by the student as an exercise. \*

quite what feeling of being part, in his mind, of a conspiracy against him ; or not perhaps so much against him as against his idea of boot. One does not, I suppose, care to feel like that ; for it was again many months before my next visit to his shop, paid, I remember, with a feeling : 'Oh, well, I can't leave the old boy—so here goes ! Perhaps it will be his elder brother !'

For his elder brother, I knew, had not character enough to reproach me even dumbly.

And, to my relief, in the shop there did appear to be his elder brother, handling a piece of leather.

'Well, Mr. Gessler,' I said, 'how are you?'

'I'm breddy well,' he said slowly : 'but my elder brudder is dead.'

And I saw that it was indeed himself—but now aged and wan ! And never before had I heard him mention his brother. Much shocked, I murmured : 'Oh ! I'm sorry !'

'Yes,' he answered, 'he was a good man, he made a good bood ; but he is dead.' And he touched the top of his head, where the hair had suddenly gone as thin as it had been on that of his poor brother, to indicate, I suppose, the cause of death. 'He could nod ged over losing de oder shop. Do you wand any boods?' And he held up the leather in his hand : 'Id's a beautiful biece.'

I ordered several pairs. It was very long before they came—but they were better than ever. One simply could not wear them out. And soon after that I went abroad.

It was over a year before I was again in London.

And the first shop I went to was my old friend's. I had left a man of sixty, I came back to one of seventy-five, pinched and worn and tremulous, who genuinely, this time, did not at first know me.

'Oh! Mr. Gessler,' I said, sick at heart: 'how splendid your boots are! See, I have been wearing this pair nearly all the time I have been abroad; and they are not half worn out, are they?'

He looked long at my boots—a pair of Russia leather—and his face regained steadiness. Putting his hand on my instep, he said:

'Do dey vid you here? I 'ad drouble wid dat bair, I remember.'

I assured him that they had fitted beautifully.

'Do you wand any boods?' he said. 'I can make dem quickly: id is a slack dime.'

I answered: 'Please, please! I want boots all round—every kind!'

'I'll make a vresh model. Your foot must be bigger!' And with utter slowness he traced round my foot, and felt my toes, only once looking up to say:

'Did I dell you my brudder was dead?'

To watch him was painful, so feeble had he grown; I was glad to get away.

I had given those boots up, when one evening they came. Opening the parcel, I set the four pairs out in a row. Then one by one I tried them on. There was no doubt about it. In shape and fit, in finish and quality of leather, they were the best he had ever made. And in the mouth of one of the town walking-boots I found his bill. •The

amount was the same as usual, but it gave me quite a shock. He had never before sent it till quarter-day. I flew downstairs, and wrote a cheque, and posted it at once with my own hand.

A week later, passing the little street, I thought I would go in and tell him how splendidly the new boots fitted. But when I came to where his shop had been, his name was gone. Still there, in the window, were the slim pumps, the patent leather cloth tops, the sooty riding-boots.

I went in, very much disturbed. In the two little shops—again made into one—was a young man with an English face.

'Mr. Gessler in?' I said.

He gave me a strange ingratiating look.

'No, sir,' he said, 'no. But we can attend to anything with pleasure. We have taken the shop over. You have seen our name, no doubt, next door. We make for some very good people.'

'Yes, yes,' I said, 'but Mr. Gessler?'

'Oh!' he answered; 'dead.'

'Dead! But I received these boots from him last Wednesday week.'

'Ah!' he said, 'a shocking go. Poor old man starved 'imself.'

'Good God!'

'Slow starvation, the doctor called it! You see he went to work in such a way! Would keep the shop on; wouldn't have a soul to touch his boots except himself. When he got an order, it took him such a time people won't wait. He lost everybody. And there he'd sit, goin' on and on—I will say that for him—not a man in

London made a better boot! But look at the competition! He never advertised! Would 'ave the best leather, too, and do it all 'imself. Well, there it is. What could you expect with his ideas?'

'But starvation—!'

'That may be a bit flowery, as the sayin' is—but I know myself he was sittin' over his boots day and night to the very last. You see I used to watch him. Never gave himself time to eat; never had a penny in the house. All went in rent and leather. How he lived so long I don't know. He regular let his fire go out. He was a character. But he made good boots.'

'Yes,' I said, 'he made good boots.'

And I turned and went out quickly, for I did not want that youth to know that I could hardly see.

JOHN GALSWORTHY

(From *The Inn of Tranquillity*)

## NOTES

### INTRODUCTION

In modern times, even in India, and very markedly in Europe and America, trade tends to fall into the hands of the big companies (called 'trusts' or 'combines') which open branches in all the most important cities, and generally succeed in driving out the small independent traders who cannot sell goods so cheaply because they do not get them in such huge quantities. But the 'mass-production' of articles often leads to the production of things which, though cheap, do not last long because they are not so well made. In *Quality* Galsworthy gives us an example of this, and also depicts, with a



few strokes of his masterly hand, the human tragedy that often underlies the ruthless competition inevitable in 'business' under the present system.

## A. COMPREHENSION

### §1. The bootmaker and his shop

#### KEY-QUESTION

'What signs were there that Mr. Gessler was a man "secretly possessed of the Ideal"?'

#### EXPLANATIONS

**the West End:** the fashionable part of London, where mostly rich people live.

**tenement:** dwelling-place, generally used to mean a 'flat' or part of a building of which the remainder is occupied by other tenants.

✓ **reaching nothing down:** (idiom) making no articles except those which he made to order. Articles which are not made to order, but simply on the chance that they may fit any buyer are called 'reach-me-downs' or 'ready-made' articles.

**pumps:** light shoes for dancing, made of patent leather.

**making water come into one's mouth:** (metaphor) having the same effect as the sight of a delicious food, arousing desire to possess the thing seen.

**one who saw . . . Boot:** an idealist, one who loved his work so much that he imagined the perfect boot and then tried to produce it.

**prototypes:** the originals, of which all later specimens are only imitations.

**I was promoted to him:** I was given the privilege of having my boots made by him, a privilege which, as a child, I had not had.

**some inkling haunted me:** some slight knowledge was frequently present in my mind.

**sardonic:** not really amusing though appearing to be. People who have red hair are often laugh<sup>r</sup>

at, because it is rather unusual. Mr. Gessler was not a man to be laughed at, however, but to be respected, and, later, to be pitied.

**'Id is an ardt'**: Germans find it difficult to pronounce correctly the letters 't', 'th', 's', 'c' and 'f' in English, and, throughout the story you find that Mr. Gessler uses 'd' for 't' and 'th', etc. So this sentence means: 'It is an art'.

**guttural**: sounding in the throat.

**one secretly possessed of the Ideal**: see above in explanation of 'one who saw before him the Soul of Boot'.

**with a great industry**: very hard-working.

**'I'll ask my brudder'** (brother): the elder brother was more 'watery', i.e. weaker than the younger, so he never decided anything of his own accord, but always said 'I will ask my brother'. From this he could easily be distinguished.

## §2. Ordering boots

### KEY-QUESTION

'What was remarkable about Mr. Gessler's boots and the way he made them?'

### EXPLANATIONS

**ran up bills**: bought things on credit, i.e. not paying for them until a long time afterwards.

**beyond the temporary**: i.e. the everlasting. The form of a boot wears out, but the Idea or 'Soul of Boot' lasts.

**sort of well**: there was a counter, like the parapet of a well.

**tip-tap of bast slippers**: the noise he made in walking with his rough sandals made of 'bast', a fibre from the bark of a tree. Like the noise made by 'chappals'.

**the incense of his trade**: i.e. the smell of leather.

**biece:** piece. See note on Mr. Gessler's pronunciation.

**rebuking the way in which one had disorganized this masterpiece:** criticizing me for having used such beautiful boots carelessly and worn them out.

**feeling himself into the heart of my requirements:** his fingers were so skilled that he could feel exactly what shape the boot ought to be in order to fit the foot perfectly.

**creaked:** made a squeaking sound (Mr. Gessler pronounced it 'greaked').

**'You goddem wed before dey found demselves?':** you got them wet before they found themselves? (i.e. before they were seasoned.)

**birdt:** birth.

**the inferior integument:** the covering (boots) of poorer quality.

**endeavouring to be fashionable . . . .:** it was the fashion to wear boots rather pointed at the toe; they compressed the toes, and therefore hurt.

**virms:** firms, companies.

**Drash:** trash, rubbish, useless stuff.

**Dey:** they, i.e. the big companies.

**lofe:** love

**Nemesis fell:** The goddess of Vengeance punished me, i.e. I suffered the 'karma' of my action.

### §3. The old bootmakers' decline and death

#### KEY-QUESTION<sup>1</sup>

#### EXPLANATIONS

**another name . . . . Royal Family:** Mr. Gessler could no longer afford to pay the rent of the whole shop, so he had let half of it to another firm, who advertised that they made boots for the Royal Family.

<sup>1</sup> To be supplied by the student as an exercise.

**part, in his mind, of a conspiracy against him:** he felt that society was trying to destroy his business, by buying boots from the big companies.

**the old boy:** a term of affectionate familiarity, as we say 'old fellow'

**wan:** colourless, pale

**losing de oder shop:** losing the other shop.

**I had left . . . seventy-five:** Mr. Gessler seemed fifteen years older, though only one year had passed.

**he had never before sent it till quarter-day:** it is the custom in England to send bills every quarter, i.e. every three months, not monthly as in India. The fact that Mr. Gessler had sent the bill with the boots showed that he was very much in need of money.

**ingratiating:** wishing to win favour.

**a shockin' go:** (slang) a shocking happening.

**a bit flowery:** a little exaggerated.

**All went in rent and leather:** he spent all his money in paying his rent and buying the best leather; nothing was left for food

**He regular let his fire go out:** (metaphor) regular (slang) = really.

**a character:** a strange character.

**I did not want . . . hardly see:** I felt ashamed to be seen with tears in my eyes.

## B. APPRECIATION

What skill this master story-teller shows in narrating this pathetic story! How simple the story is! There is no working up of an exciting situation to hold the reader's attention,—not even as much plot as there is in Tagore's *Babus of Nayanjore*,—nothing but a description of an old boot-maker and his work. It is in such work that Galsworthy reveals his genius,—his ability to make the things of ordinary life interesting, and to make them happen before the imagination of the reader with such vividness that the reader himself feels

- what the author felt in the presence of those events. And there is not a useless word in the story. Every sentence serves its purpose, and no more.

### C. ASSIGNMENTS

1. Summarize in the smallest possible number of words the essential facts of this story.
2. Write a character of Mr. Gessler, and contrast him with his brother.

## DOTHEBOYS HALL

### §1

[KEY-QUESTION: *In what ways were the characters of Mr. and Mrs. Squeers alike, and in what ways did they differ?*]

A ride of two hundred and odd miles in severe weather, is one of the best softeners of a hard bed that ingenuity can devise. Perhaps it is even a sweetener of dreams, for those which hovered over the rough couch of Nicholas and whispered their airy innocence in his ear were of an agreeable and happy kind. He was making his fortune very fast indeed, when the faint glimmer of an expiring candle shone before his eyes, and a voice he had no difficulty in recognizing as part and parcel of Mr. Squeers, admonished him that it was time to rise.

'Past seven, Nickleby,' said Mr. Squeers.

'Has morning come already?' asked Nicholas, sitting up in bed.

'Ah! That it has' replied Squeers, 'and ready

iced too. Now, Nickleby, come : tumble up; will you ?'

Nicholas needed no further admonition, but 'tumbled up' at once, and proceeded to dress himself by the light of the taper, which Mr. Squeers carried in his hand.

'Here's a pretty go,' said that gentleman ; 'the pump's froze.'

'Indeed !' said Nicholas, not much interested in the intelligence.

'Yes,' replied Squeers. 'You can't wash yourself this morning.'

'Not wash myself !' exclaimed Nicholas.

'No, not a bit of it,' rejoined Squeers tartly. 'So you must be content giving yourself a dry polish till we break the ice in the well, and can get a bucketful out for the boys. Don't stand staring at me, but do look sharp, will you ?'

Offering no further observation, Nicholas huddled on his clothes. Squeers, meanwhile, opened the shutters and blew the candle out ; when the voice of his amiable consort was heard in the passage demanding admittance.

'Come in, my love,' said Squeers.

Mrs. Squeers came in, still habited in the primitive night-jacket which had displayed the symmetry of her figure on the previous night, and further ornamented with a beaver bonnet of some antiquity, which she wore, with much ease and lightness, on the top of the night-cap before mentioned.

'Drat the things,' said the lady, opening the cupboard ; 'I can't find the school spoon anywhere.'

‘Never mind it, my dear,’ observed Squeers in a soothing manner; ‘it’s of no consequence.’

‘No consequence, why how you talk!’ retorted Mrs. Squeers sharply; ‘Isn’t it brimstone this morning?’

‘I forgot, my dear,’ rejoined Squeers; ‘Yes, it certainly is. ‘We purify the boys’ blood now and then, Nickleby.’

‘Purify fiddlesticks’ ends,’ said his lady. ‘Don’t think, young man, that we go to the expense of flour of brimstone and molasses, just to purify them; because if you think we carry on the business in that way, you’ll find yourself mistaken, and so I tell you plainly.’

‘My dear,’ said Squeers frowning. ‘Hm!’

‘Oh! nonsense,’ rejoined Mrs. Squeers. ‘If the young man comes to be a teacher here, let him understand, at once, that we don’t want any foolery about the boys. They have the brimstone and treacle partly because if they hadn’t something or other in the way of medicine they’d be always ailing and giving a world of trouble, and partly because it spoils their appetites and comes cheaper than breakfast and dinner. So, it does them good and us good at the same time, and that’s fair enough I’m sure.’

Having given this explanation, Mrs. Squeers put her hand into the closet and instituted a stricter search after the spoon, in which Mr. Squeers assisted. A few words passed between them while they were thus engaged, but as their voices were partially stifled by the cupboard, all that Nicholas could distinguish was

that Mr. Squeers said what Mrs. Squeers had said was injudicious, and that Mrs. Squeers said what Mr. Squeers said was 'stuff'.

A vast deal of searching and rummaging ensued, and it proving fruitless, Smike was called in, and pushed by Mrs. Squeers, and boxed by Mr. Squeers, which course of treatment brightening his intellect, enabled him to suggest that possibly Mrs. Squeers might have the spoon in her pocket, as indeed turned out to be the case. As Mrs. Squeers had previously protested, however, that she was quite certain she had not got it, Smike received another box on the ear for presuming to contradict his mistress, together with a promise of a sound thrashing if he were not more respectful in future; so that he took nothing very advantageous by his notion.

'A most invaluable woman, that, Nickleby,' said Squeers when his consort had hurried away, pushing the drudge before her.

'Indeed, sir!' observed Nicholas.

'I don't know her equal,' said Squeers; 'I do not know her equal. That woman, Nickleby, is always the same—always the same bustling, lively, active, saving creetur that you see her now.'

Nicholas sighed involuntarily at the thought of the agreeable domestic prospect thus opened to him; but Squeers was, fortunately, too much occupied with his own reflexions to perceive it.

'It's my way to say, when I'm up in London,' continued Squeers, 'that to them boys she's a mother. But she's more than a mother to them; ten times more. She does things for them boys,



Nickleby, that I don't believe half the mothers going would do for their own sons.'

'I should think they would not, sir,' answered Nicholas.

Now, the fact was, that both Mr. and Mrs. Squeers viewed the boys in the light of their proper and natural enemies; or, in other words, they held and considered that their business and profession was to get as much from every boy as could by possibility be screwed out of him. On this point they were both agreed, and behaved in unison accordingly. The only difference between them was, that Mrs. Squeers waged war against the enemy openly and fearlessly, and that Squeers covered his rascality, even at home, with a spice of his habitual deceit; as if he really had a notion of some day or other being able to take himself in, and persuade his own mind that he was a very good fellow.

'But come,' said Squeers, interrupting the progress of some thoughts to this effect in the mind of his usher, 'let's go to the school-room; and lend me a hand with my school coat, will you?'

## §2

[KEY-QUESTION: *What different sorts of boys did Nicholas observe in the school and how were they treated?*]

Nicholas assisted his master to put on an old fustian shooting jacket, which he took down from a peg in the passage; and Squeers, arming himself with his cane, led the way across a yard, to a door in the rear of the house.

'There,' said the schoolmaster, as they stopped in together; 'this is our shop, Nickleby!'

It was such a crowded scene, and there were so many objects to attract attention, that, at first, Nicholas stared about him really without seeing anything at all. By degrees, however, the place resolved itself into a bare and dirty room, with a couple of windows, whereof a tenth part might be of glass, the remainder being stopped up with old copybooks and paper. There were a couple of long old rickety desks, cut and notched, and inked, and damaged in every possible way; two or three forms; a detached desk for Squeers; and another for his assistant. The ceiling was supported, like that of a barn, by cross-beams and rafters; and the walls were so stained and discoloured that it was impossible to tell whether they had ever been touched with paint or whitewash.

But the pupils—the young noblemen! How the last faint traces of hope, the remotest glimmering of any good to be derived from his effort in this den faded from the mind of Nicholas as he looked in dismay around! Pale and haggard faces, lank and bony figures, children with the countenances of old men, deformities with irons upon their limbs, boys of stunted growth, and others whose long meagre legs would hardly bear their stooping bodies, all crowded on the view together. There were little faces which should have been handsome, darkened with the scowl of sullen, dogged suffering; there was childhood with the light of its eye quenched, its beauty gone, and its helplessness alone remaining; there were vicious-faced boys,

brooding with leaden eyes like malefactors in a jail.

And yet this scene, painful as it was, had its grotesque features, which, in a less interested observer than Nicholas, might have provoked a smile. Mrs. Squeers stood at one of the desks, presiding over an immense basin of brimstone and treacle, of which delicious compound she administered a large instalment to each boy in succession : using for the purpose a common wooden spoon, which might have been originally manufactured for some gigantic top, and which widened every young gentleman's mouth considerably : they being all obliged, under heavy corporal penalties, to take in the whole of the bowl at a gasp. In another corner, huddled together for companionship, were the little boys who had arrived on the preceding night, three of them in very large leather breeches, and two in old trousers, a something tighter fit than drawers are usually worn ; at no great distance from these was seated the juvenile son and heir of Mr. Squeers—a striking likeness of his father—kicking, with great vigour, under the hands of Smike, who was fitting upon him a pair of new boots that bore a most suspicious resemblance to those which the least of the little boys had worn on the journey down—as the little boy himself seemed to think, for he was regarding the appropriation with a look of most rueful amazement. Besides these, there was a long row of boys waiting, with countenances of no pleasant anticipation to be treacled ; and another file, who had just escaped from the infliction, making a

variety of wry mouths indicative of anything but satisfaction. The whole were attired in such motley, ill-sorted extraordinary garments, as would have been irresistibly ridiculous, but for the foul appearance of dirt, disorder, and disease, with which they were associated.

'Now,' said Squeers, giving the desk a great rap with his cane, which made half the little boys nearly jump out of their boots, 'is that physicking over?'

'Just over,' said Mrs. Squeers, choking the last boy in her hurry, and tapping the crown of his head with the wooden spoon to restore him. 'Here, you Smike; take away now. Look sharp!'

Smike shuffled out with the basin, and Mrs. Squeers having called up a little boy with a curly head and wiped her hands upon it, hurried out after him into a species of wash-house where there was a small fire and a large kettle, together with a number of little wooden bowls which were arranged upon a board. Into these bowls, Mrs. Squeers, assisted by the hungry servant, poured a brown composition which looked like diluted pincushions without the covers, and was called porridge. A minute wedge of brown bread was inserted in each bowl, and when they had eaten their porridge by means of the bread, the boys ate the bread itself, and had finished their breakfast; whereupon Mr. Squeers said, in a solemn voice, 'For what we have received, may the Lord make us truly thankful!'—and went away to his own.

Nicholas distended his stomach with a bowl of porridge, for much the same reason which induces some savages to swallow earth—lest they should be inconveniently hungry when there is nothing to eat. Having further disposed of a slice of bread and butter, allotted to him in virtue of his office, he sat himself down to wait for school-time.

He could not but observe how silent and sad the boys all seemed to be. There was none of the noise and clamour of the school-room; none of its boisterous play or hearty mirth. The children sat crouching together, and shivering together, and seemed to lack the spirit to move about. The only pupil who evinced the slightest tendency towards locomotion or playfulness was Master Squeers, and as his chief amusement was to tread upon the other boys' toes in his new boots, his flow of spirits was rather disagreeable than otherwise.

### §3

[KEY-QUESTION: *What was Squeers' 'practical mode of teaching'?*]

After some half hour's delay, Mr. Squeers reappeared, and the boys took their places and their books, of which latter commodity the average might be about one to eight learners. A few minutes having elapsed, during which Mr. Squeers looked very profound, as if he had a perfect apprehension of what was inside all the books, and could say every word of their contents by heart if he only chose to take the trouble, that gentleman called up the first class.

Obedient to this summons there ranged themselves in front of the schoolmaster's desk, half-a-dozen scarecrows, out at knees and elbows, one of whom placed a torn and filthy book beneath his learned eye.

'This is the first class in English spelling and philosophy, Nickleby,' said Squeers, beckoning Nicholas to stand beside him. 'We'll get up a Latin one, and hand that over to you. Now then, where is the first boy?'

'Please, sir, he's cleaning the back parlour window,' said the temporary head of the philosophical class.

'So he is, to be sure,' rejoined Squeers. 'We go upon the practical mode of teaching, Nickleby; the regular education system. C - l - e - a - n, clean, verb active, to make bright, to scour. W - i - n, win, d - e - r, der, winder, a casement. When the boy knows this out of the book, he goes and does it. It's just the same principle as the use of the globes. Where is the second boy?'

'Please, sir, he's weeding the garden,' replied a small voice.

'To be sure,' said Squeers, by no means disconcerted. 'So he is. B - o - t, bot, t - i - n, tin, bottin, n - e - y, ney, bottinney, a noun substantive, the knowledge of plants. When he has learned that bottinney means a knowledge of plants, he goes and knows 'em. That's our system, Nickleby; what do you think of it?'

'It's a very useful one, at any rate,' answered Nicholas.

'I believe you,' rejoined Squeers, not remarking the emphasis of his usher. 'Third boy, what's a horse?'

'A beast, sir,' replied the boy.

'So it is,' said Squeers. 'Ain't it, Nickleby?'

'I believe there is no doubt of that, sir,' answered Nicholas.

'Of course there isn't,' said Squeers. 'A horse is a quadruped, and quadruped's Latin for beast, as everybody that's gone through the grammar knows, or else where's the use of having grammars at all?'

'Where indeed!' said Nicholas abstractedly.

'As you are perfect in that,' resumed Squeers, turning to the boy, 'go and look after *my* horse, and rub him down well, or I'll rub you down. The rest of the class go and draw water up, till somebody tells you to leave off, for it's washing-day to-morrow and they want the coppers filled.'

So saying, he dismissed the class to their experiments in practical philosophy, and eyed Nicholas with a look, half cunning and half doubtful, as if he were not altogether certain what he might think of him by this time.

'That's the way we do it, Nickleby,' he said, after a pause.

Nicholas shrugged his shoulders in a manner that was scarcely perceptible, and said he saw it was.

'And a very good way it is, too,' said Squeers. 'Now, just take them fourteen little boys and hear them some reading, because, you know, you

must begin to be useful. Idling about here won't do.'

Mr. Squeers said this, as if it had suddenly occurred to him, either that he must not say too much to his assistant, or that his assistant did not say enough to him in praise of the establishment. The children were arranged in a semi-circle round the new master, and he was soon listening to their dull, drawling, hesitating recital of those stories of engrossing interest which are to be found in the more antiquated spelling books.

In this exciting occupation, the morning lagged heavily on. At one o'clock, the boys having previously had their appetites thoroughly taken away by stir-about and potatoes, sat down in the kitchen to some hard salt beef, of which Nicholas was graciously permitted to take his portion to his own solitary desk, to eat it there in peace. After this, there was another hour of crouching in the school-room and shivering with cold, and then school began again.

CHARLES DICKENS

(From *Nicholas Nickleby*)

## NOTES

### INTRODUCTION

Dickens, as you will learn on referring to the note on his life at the end of this Group, had a heart overflowing with sympathy for the poor and the oppressed, for he had himself experienced the miseries of poverty and oppression. He wrote his novel *Nicholas Nickleby*, from which this extract is taken, to call the attention of the public to the shocking things that went on under



the name of 'education' in private schools, and to the need of establishing a proper system of education under the supervision of the Government; for, at that time in England (almost exactly a century ago), education was much more backward in many respects than it is in India to-day. Dotheboys Hall is the name which Dickens invented for the horrible school here described by him; the word is pronounced 'do the boys' Hall; to 'do' a person means to entice him to believe that you are going to benefit him, and then to deceive him and make a profit out of him; this is exactly what the dreadful headmaster of Dotheboys Hall, Mr. Squeers, did with the boys who had been entrusted to him as pupils. Nicholas Nickleby, the hero of the story, had just accepted an appointment as assistant-teacher offered to him by Squeers who spoke of the school in the most exaggerated terms, representing it as a school for 'young noblemen', housed in a 'splendid mansion', so that Nicholas arrived in a state of high expectation of a fine career before him. What he actually found, you will learn from this description of his first day in Dotheboys Hall under Mr. Wackford Squeers.

## A. COMPREHENSION

### §1. Mr. and Mrs. Squeers

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#### KEY-QUESTION

'In what ways were the characters of Mr. and Mrs. Squeers alike, and in what ways did they differ from one another?'

#### EXPLANATIONS

**A ride of two hundred and odd miles:** from London to Yorkshire, in the North of England, where Dotheboys Hall was. Nicholas had to travel by coach, as there were no railways then.

**best softeners of a hard bed:** when you have been jolted in a coach for several days, you are ready to sleep with pleasure even on a hard bed.

**He was making his fortune:** i.e. in his dream.

**admonished:** warned.

**ready iced:** below freezing point, frosty.

**tumble up:** (slang) get out of bed quickly.

**taper:** feeble light, like a small thin candle.

**a pretty go:** (irony and slang) an unfortunate happening.

**froze:** frozen. Notice that the 'headmaster' speaks very bad English, full of slang and mistakes in grammar!

**dry polish:** clean your face without water!

**his amiable consort:** (irony) his 'lovable' wife (you will soon learn whether she was lovable or not).

**still habited . . . . before mentioned:** Mrs. Squeers was wearing a ridiculous mixture of night-clothes and day-clothes, and the description is ironical throughout, i.e. Dickens uses words signifying beauty (e.g. symmetry, ornamented, ease and lightness) meaning that Mrs. Squeers looked just the opposite of beautiful, i.e. very ugly. Dickens was very fond of 'irony', and there are many examples in this piece.

**Drat:** (slang) curse.

**the school spoon:** only *one* spoon for the whole school!

**brimstone morning:** the morning on which brimstone (i.e. sulphur) was given to the boys as a medicine. Flower-sulphur is a purifier of the blood, and is used as a medicine, but as it is very unpleasant to the taste, it was mixed with 'treacle' (sugar in a semi-liquid, sticky form) to conceal the bad taste somewhat.

**fiddlesticks' ends:** an interjection meaning 'nonsense!'. Mrs. Squeers means that her husband is talking rubbish.

**molasses:** treacle (see above, under brimstone).

**Hm !:** an interjection, by which Squeers means that he wishes his wife to speak less frankly; he

does not wish his new assistant to know how badly the boys are treated.

**any foolery**: any misunderstanding.

**it spoils their appetites**: they can't eat much food after getting the horrible taste of sulphur in their mouths.

**Mr. Squeers said . . . . . injudicious**: Mr. Squeers thought that Mrs. Squeers' remark to Nicholas, about giving the boys brimstone so that they might eat less, was imprudent.

**stuff**: nonsense.

**rummaging**: searching vigorously.

**Smikey**: Smikey was an unfortunate orphan boy whom Mr. and Mrs. Squeers used as a slave.

**boxed**: struck.

**intellects**: nowadays we should say 'intelligence'.

**his motion**: his suggestion (used in the sense in which we speak of 'moving' a resolution at a meeting).

**drudge**: one who does hard and unpleasant tasks.

**saving creetur**: thrifty creature (Squeers mispronounces the word as 'creetur').

**the agreeable domestic prospect**: (irony) the expectation of unpleasant relations with Mrs. Squeers in the house.

**them boys**: those boys (Squeers' grammatical blunder).

**spice**: (metaphor) flavouring.

**take himself in**: deceive himself.

**usher**: the old (contemptuous) word for a junior teacher.

## §2. The school, and the boys at their meals

### KEY-QUESTION

'What different sorts of boys did Nicholas observe in Squeers' school, and how were they treated?'

EXPLANATIONS

**fustian**: coarse cotton cloth.

**our shop**: the place of our trade or business.

**rickety**: weak, unable to stand straight.

**forms**: benches.

**barn**: godown for storing hay and corn. •

**the young noblemen**: Squeers had spoken of them as 'young noblemen' when he described the school to Nicholas before appointing him.

**this den**: (metaphor) place as filthy as an animal's cave or lair.

**deformities with irons upon their limbs**: children whose limbs were deformed, and who were therefore supported by strips of iron attached to the foot or leg.

**scowl**: frown, ugly look.

**dogged**: persistent, constant.

**leaden**: (metaphor) dull like lead, i.e. without any light of happiness in their eyes.

**malefactors**: evil-doers, criminals.

**grotesque**: absurd.

**delicious compound**: (irony).

**they being all obliged**: (nominative absolute).

**under heavy corporal penalties**: under threat of severe corporal punishment

**the bowl**: i.e. the bowl of the spoon. ••

**something tighter**: somewhat tighter.

**drawers**: undergarments for the lower part of the body.

**appropriation**: taking possession.

**countenances of no pleasant anticipation**: faces showing that they did not like what was coming to them (i.e. the sulphur and treacle).

**wry**: crooked.

**motley**: many-coloured.

**jump out of their boots**: i.e. with fright (humorous exaggeration).

**shuffled**: walked clumsily, dragging the feet.

**diluted pincushions without the covers**: pincushions are generally stuffed with saw-dust; oat-meal

of bad quality looks somewhat like saw-dust; porridge is made of oat-meal; it is a kind of '*khir*'.

**minute**: very small (pronounced 'my-nute').

**in a solemn voice**: the words which follow are a prayer commonly used after taking food. Squeers spoke it in a solemn voice, to show how religious he was!

**his own**: his own breakfast which was very different from what he gave to the boys.

**Nicholas . . . nothing to eat**: as savages eat earth (according to Dickens) to fill their stomachs when there is no likelihood of any other food being got, so Nicholas filled his stomach with the disgusting porridge.

**boisterous**: noisy.

**locomotion**: moving about.

### §3. Squeers' method of teaching

#### KEY-QUESTION

'What was Squeers' "practical mode of teaching"?'

#### EXPLANATIONS

1. **scarecrows**: (metaphor) boys so raggedly dressed that they looked like the dummies which are put up by the farmers to scare away the crows from the crops.

**out at knees and elbows**: with elbows and knees showing through the holes in their clothes.

**philosophy**: (in its literal sense) the love of wisdom, the pursuit of knowledge.

**use of the globes**: i.e. the practical demonstration of the cause of day and night, etc., by the use of globes.

**W-i-n-d-o-w**: Squeers himself does not know the correct spelling of 'window' and 'botany'!

**the emphasis of his usher**: when Nicholas replied 'It's a very useful one,' he emphasized the

word 'useful', meaning that Squeers made use of the boys to save himself the expense of paying servants. Squeers did not notice this.

**I'll rub you down:** i.e. with the cane.

**coppers:** big vessels of copper, used for heating the water in which to wash clothes.

**stories of engrossing interest:** (irony) the reading-books used in schools of that time were very dull.

**stir-about:** stew, a mixture of odd scraps of food boiled up together.

## B. APPRECIATION

Dickens differs very markedly in one particular from the other two novelists from whom we have read extracts here: he was very fond of making use of 'caricature'. 'Caricature' means the representation of a character in an exaggerated way, i.e. over-emphasizing prominent qualities, in order to make them stand out humorously. It can be done in pictures as well as in words, as, for example, the cartoons you can find in the famous humorous magazine *Punch*, in which Mr. Baldwin is represented with a huge pipe in his mouth; or someone else with a very small head and a very large stomach. Just in the same way Dickens has depicted Mr. Squeers, and especially Mrs. Squeers, as worse than it is likely that they really were. But notice also that he has not done this to excess; absurd though Squeers is, we know that Dickens is exaggerating only in order to emphasize the truth; and though the account of this school makes us laugh when we read it, yet the exaggeration does not make us forget that things, nearly as bad as these, did actually take place; and, just at the right point of the story, (in section 2, the paragraph commencing: 'But the pupils . . .') Dickens touches our hearts very deeply by his serious description of the unhappy children who suffered in this awful place.

## C. ASSIGNMENTS

1. Make a list of the ways in which Squeers and his wife 'did' the boys in Dotheboys Hall.

2. Squeers was more of a hypocrite than his wife. Prove this from examples.

3. Give examples of 'irony' from this piece.

4. Explain what is meant by 'caricature' and give examples.

5. Which of the three stories quoted in this Group do you consider to be the most effective in :—

(a) Humour.

(b) Pathos (i.e. excitement of deep feeling of pity).

(c) Realism (i.e. exact representation of life).

Support your answer in each case by giving examples and arguments.

## NOTES ON AUTHORS OF GROUP X

DR. RABINDRANATH TAGORE (1861- ) the greatest literary figure of modern India, and winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1913, is known all over the world as a poet, dramatist, novelist, educationist and philosopher. He was educated privately in Calcutta, and spent his youth looking after his father's estates in Bengal, where he gained the inspiration for many of his stories, songs and poems. In 1921 he founded his school and *ashram* at Shantiniketan, Bolpur, Bengal, where he lives when he is not travelling from country to country to earn funds to carry on the institutions to which he has devoted everything he has.

JOHN GALSWORTHY (1867-1932) was educated at Harrow and Oxford. In his great novels, particularly those of the *Forsyte Saga* which cover the history of three generations of a typical English family of the upper middle class, he has portrayed with marvellous skill and understanding

the life of the England of his time and social level. In his novels, as well as in his plays and short stories, he shows his sympathy for suffering and his appreciation of the dangers of social inequality and economic injustice, but unlike his contemporary, Mr. H. G. Wells, he contents himself solely with depicting what he sees, with marvellous accuracy and art; he proposes no remedies for the evils which he feels and knows.

CHARLES DICKENS (1812-1870) was born in very humble circumstances and knew what it was to be poor and friendless. When he was quite a child, his father, a clerk, was imprisoned for debt, and he had to earn his living by working in a factory. From the experience of these years he learned to know and understand the lives of the poor, and he has embodied it in his novels. Later he became a shorthand-writer, and reported the speeches made in Parliament. At the same time he began to write articles for newspapers and magazines, and with the publication of his *Pickwick Papers* in monthly parts, he rose to fame. Though he loved to ridicule folly and vice to the point of depicting it as a mere caricature of reality, his own experience of human misery had been so vivid that he never failed in his writings to appeal to pity, and practically all his stories are marked with deep feeling for those who are unfortunate in life.



